

ADAM

JULY, 1963

2/-

FACT • FICTION • HUMOR

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A WATCH-DOG FOR
VENUS —page 30



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PLAY IT BY EAR

FICTION - W.J. REYNOLDS

Lois had suckered him once, and she'd frame him again, unless he could beat her at her own deadly game . . .

AS soon as he entered and closed the door, Alex Gilford knew that he was not alone in the apartment. He eased the bag of food, which he had just purchased at the delicatessen, to the floor. He stood quietly, glances shuttling about the cheap room, the alcove kitchen, then coming to rest on the bedroom door which was slightly ajar, his nose twitching—perfume.

The elusive odor had once been very familiar to Alex; it had been Lois' favorite perfume.

The anger rose in Alex suddenly; an anger fed by five years behind the grey walls, lousy food, hard-eyed guards with ready clubs. The anger had been fed by careful and cool thinking after the first bitter rage and frustration had abated. This long and candid thinking had been substantiated not an hour ago by a phone call to an old friend and fellow worker at Eby's Music Shoppes. From him, Alex learned that Lois had got her divorce from Alex less than a year after Alex was sent to prison, and had married Jerome Eby.

Alex stood rigidly by the door; fought down the anger. He was a parolee, he could not afford anger. He had five more years of humiliation, bootlicking, before he could call himself a man again. Just a little trouble and he would be behind the grey walls again. He would have to find out what Lois was after, then play it by ear . . .

"You can come out now, Lois."

She appeared promptly in the bedroom doorway. Alex sucked in his breath. He remained still with an effort, fighting both anger and the frightening desire to rush to her, take her into his arms, pour out his loneliness, his love—and hate.

The strain was in his voice. "What do you want Lois?" He could not conceal all of his feeling. The five years of woman-hunger was bottled inside him along with the memory of the almost unendurable satisfaction he had known with Lois.

He could see that Lois knew. Her dark eyes widened with pleasure, her red lips curved into a slow smile, the way they used to do when she was sure of herself, of him.

Alex was confused. How could he love and hate at the same time? He had every reason to hate her if his thinking was correct, and he knew it was. Yet, at this moment, all he could think of was the warm feel of her in his arms,

the feel of her sleek curves, her ability to arouse the savage desire in him. He remained rigid by the door.

"Hello, Alex. Is that all you have to say to me?"

"What is there to say, Lois? You divorced me after I went to prison. I had nothing to say about it. What else is there?"

She moved toward him. He knew by the way she moved that she wore no bra—Lois didn't need one. The stretch slacks were a part of her lush body and her long legs.

She came all the way against him, and he shrank from the electric contact of her body. He fought the desire to take her in his arms; to pour out his need for her; to revel in the pure joy of her body—to throttle that slender neck with his squeezing hands.

Was he still in love with her? Or was it just pent up woman-hunger. Maybe it was both.

"I've missed you, Alex, darling." Her throaty voice was caressing. "How I've missed you. I was a fool to divorce you."

"Then why did you?"

"I was hurt, angry. The prosecution made a good case against you, Alex, even though the 20,000 you were supposed to have embezzled was never found. I suppose I believed it, too, for awhile. I know now you never took the money. Eby took it and framed you."

"That was my story, remember?"

She put her arms around his neck, burying her face in the hollow of his throat. Her breath and her lips were fluttering flames against his skin.

"I love you, Alex—I've never stopped. I want you, darling, I want you now." Her lips trailed across his neck.

With a groan, Alex took her in his arms, crushed her against him, his lips meeting hers. They stood locked in a straining embrace, swaying, passion surging beyond control.

"Alex, darling," she moaned. "Alex . . ."

It was dark outside when she stirred in his arms. "Alex, I'd better get us something to eat. You need something, and I'm starved."

"Who needs food?"

She laughed contentedly, stroking his hip with her foot. "I do; you do."

He started to pull her to him, but she twisted away, coming out of the bed in a lithe movement. She stood smiling down at him. "I'll shower, then run down to the delicatessen."

"No need—there's food in the bag by the door."

He lay listening to the shower start, then when he was sure, he eased out of bed, went to her bag.

(Continued on page 41)



DANGER IN PARADISE

THE sky was pale blue — like the great, overgrown, soft egg of a robin. John Lantin stood on the deck as they pushed him forward to the railing and he said this. He looked up at the sky and he told them what he thought it looked like and the mate, a bony Spaniard by the name of Rodrigues, said, "You forget that robin stuff, fat man, and get a move on."

John Lantin, on this morning of September 9, 1953, stood there on the deck of the American merchantman *Pilot* and he grinned at the men who were now forcing him into the long boat. He had been convicted of inciting the crew to mutiny.

"I would have made a good enough captain," he told the court at his trial. He'd stood there, a jolly mountain of fat, weighing well over 300 pounds, standing over six feet in height, a head of wild curls that made him look always like an image of a drunken Zeus. His shirt was always hanging out of his trousers and his trousers always seemed to be on the verge of slipping down off his enormous hips; even standing perfectly still, he gave the impression of a body in constant motion.

"I would've fed you better than this damn swill," he'd announced to the men who had gathered on the deck to witness his trial. "I'd've stocked up on steaks, lads," he told

them, laughing, patting his huge belly as he spoke. "And legs of lamb so full of fine juices you'd damn near drown yourself trying to bite into them. The world's full of such wonders for a man's stomach and we get swill. We get it boiled and broiled and fried up-sideways, damn it, but it's swill all the same. Now am I right, lads? Or am I wrong?" And this business of the grand wonders that existed for a man's stomach was his only defence at the trial.

Now, Rodrigues and three other men were pushing him toward the long boat. "Move, fat man," the bony mate said, prodding his arm. Lantin laughed.

"You poor damn pack of bones," he said to Rodrigues. "Too bad you never had a body to live your lousy life with. You might've had yourself a time or two."

There was scattered laughter among the men when they heard Lantin insult the mate this way. Rodrigues snarled at Lantin, poked him hard in the back with his pistol.

When they finally got him into the boat, they lowered it slowly

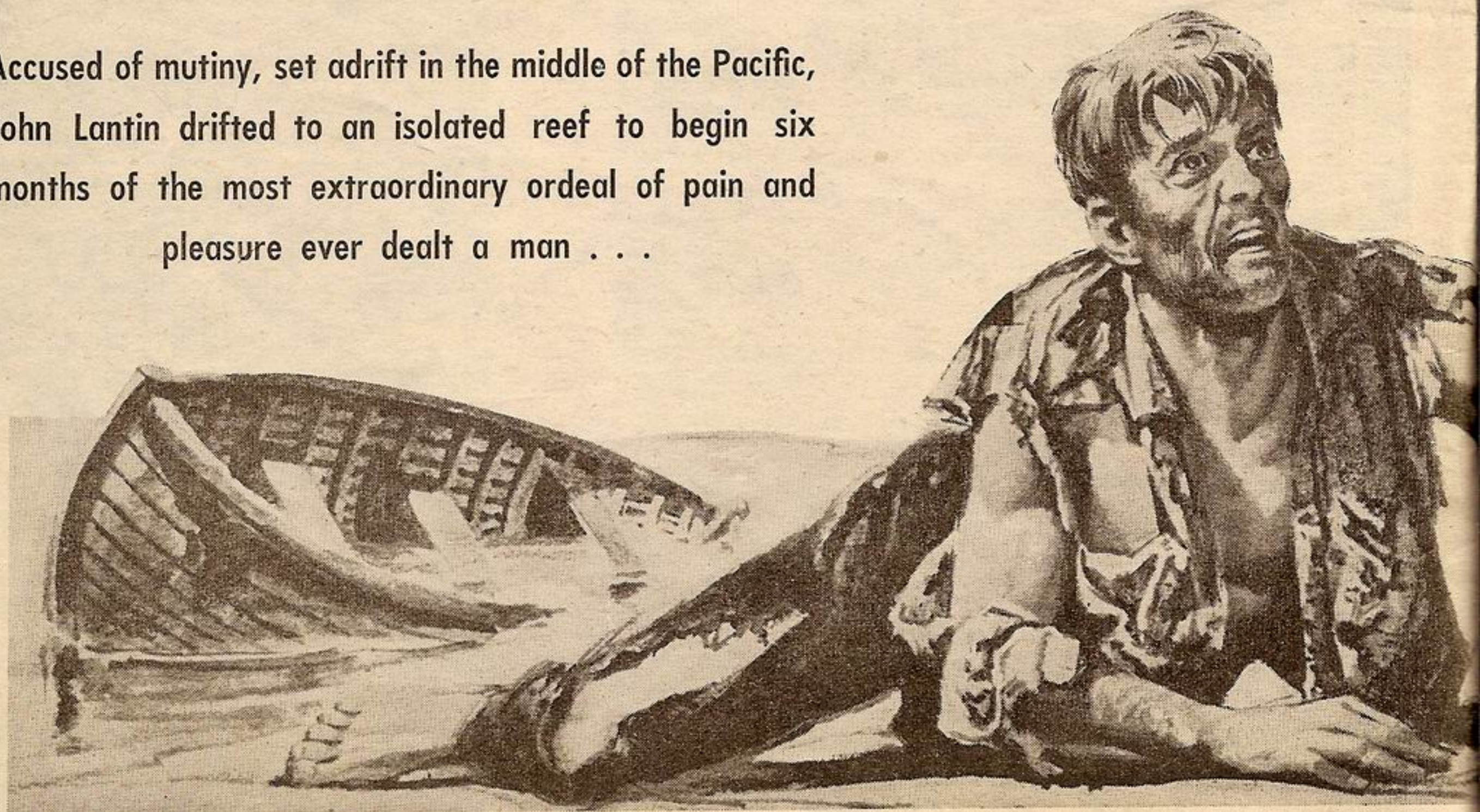
into a tossing sea, the men hanging heavy on the ropes to keep the enormous weight from crashing to splinters in the sea below.

"I'll spit on all your lousy graves," Lantin shouted up at the ship's crew when they tossed the ropes down after him and the small boat started to drift away from the *Pilot*. "I'll spit on them, hear? Then I'll spill a bit of wine on the dirt. That'll make the worms drunk. They'll have a better appetite that way."

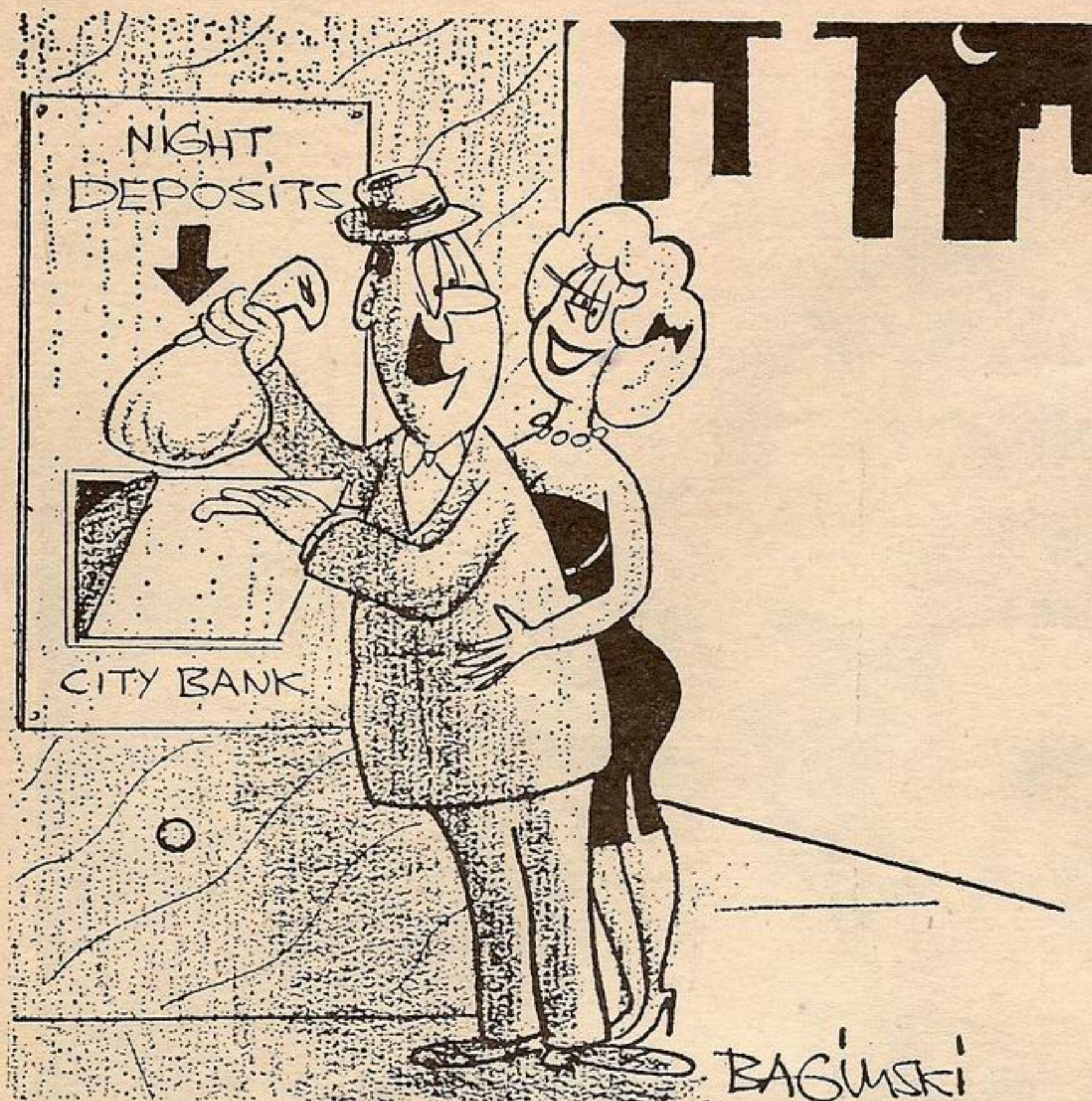
He laughed heartily as the choppy waves pulled him further and further away from the *Pilot*. He cursed them all and laughed and then he turned his eyes off to the robin-egg blue sky in the distance and he wondered if there was any land left in the world.

Lantin knew now that he was somewhere in the Coral Sea. They had picked up a cargo of wool in Cookstown and were heading north-east for a stop-off at Segond in the New Hebrides. But he had no idea of how far he was from any kind of land. There were islands enough in the vicinity, but none he could see.

Accused of mutiny, set adrift in the middle of the Pacific, John Lantin drifted to an isolated reef to begin six months of the most extraordinary ordeal of pain and pleasure ever dealt a man . . .







"Honest, it isn't mine! It belongs to my boss! Honest!"

"I'll spit on all their lousy graves," he muttered to himself as he relaxed in the bottom of the boat, stretching his huge body and letting himself fall off to sleep since there was not much else to be done and John Lantin was a practical man.

The small boat drifted on calm seas for over two weeks. There was a storm that lasted for two hours on the fifth day. The boat had been tossed about on the high tops of waves like a brittle toy, with Lantin shoving his enormous weight first to one side, then to the other, to keep the craft from turning over. But when the storm had ended, the sea became calm once more and stayed that way.

The color of the sky did not seem to change. The sun burned with a kind of anger in the pale sky. Lantin's throat felt like a sand-pit. But he was careful with the single barrel of water they had given him. He took two mouthfuls a day. He ate two dried biscuits each day. But he slept much of the time and his dreams were always about wines and cognacs and roasted soft birds and beef red as blood and, of course, women as soft as the birds and as raw as the beef and as intoxicating as the wines and cognacs.

He saw the faces and the bodies of the women he had loved. He could recall their names, the sounds of their laughter. Janine in Marseilles; Anna in Lisbon; Zita in Naples with the dark hair that reached almost to the floor.

There had been so many and life had been so very fine and

now his own dying would be a stupid comedy — the thirst eating out his insides like a damned hyena and the sun would drive him mad. But Lantin laughed even at this and cursed the dying too and the sky that would not change its foolish color and the sea that at least would be a large enough grave to hold his mountain of a corpse.

On the 16th day, John Lantin lay in the bottom of the small boat, too weak to move, the salt having turned his lips white. He lay there, hardly breathing, wait-

ing to die, wondering what it would be to feel the last moment of his own life and the first of his being dead.

But then he saw the island and he laughed softly. He pulled himself up a bit to see better and it was there, all right. He saw the thin line of palm trees blurred against the sky. He saw the curving rim of land, the white beach, the mountain peak that shone a startling green color in the sun.

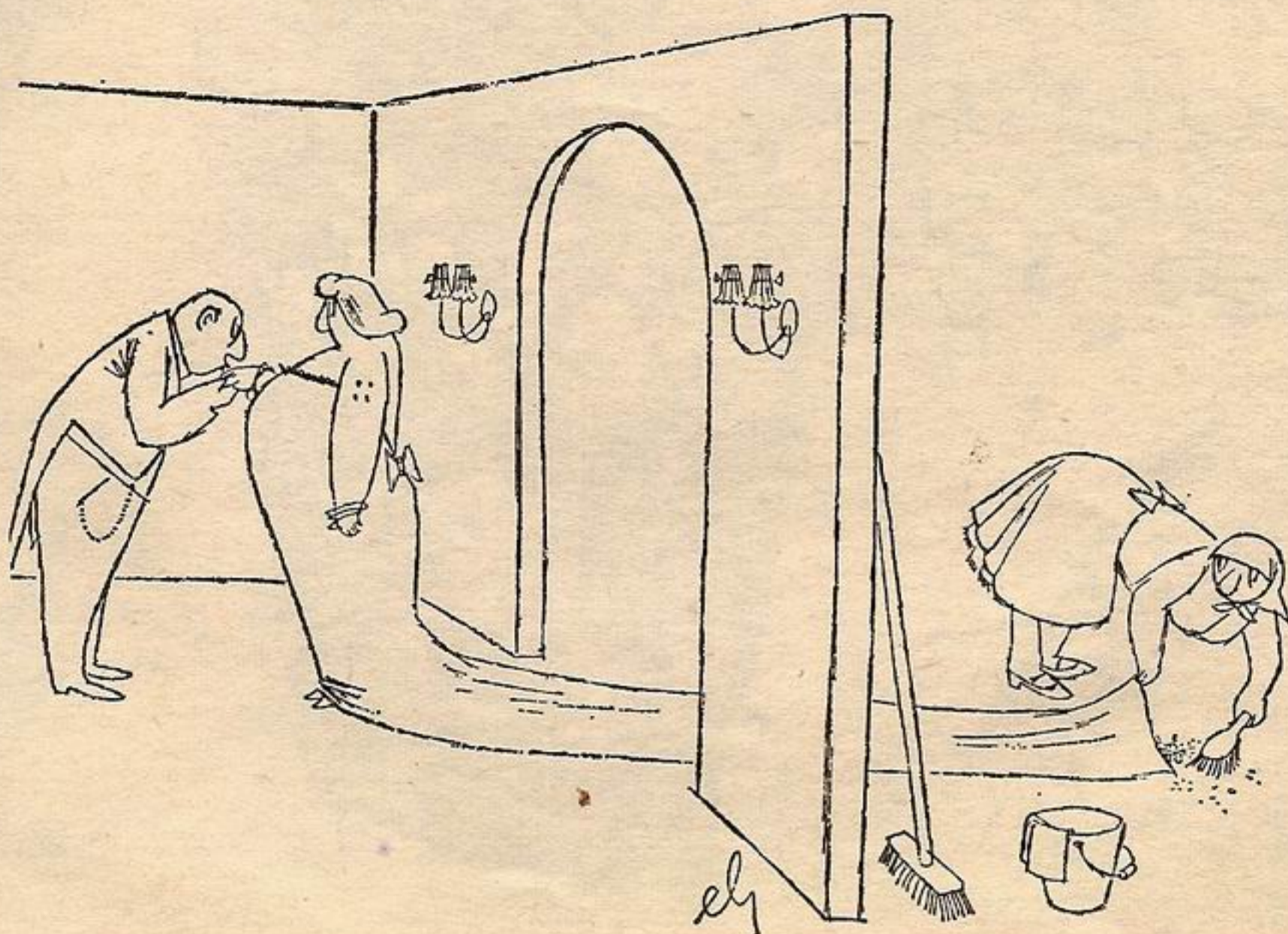
It took an entire day for the sea to wash John Lantin's boat the fives miles to land. He thought for a time that perhaps the tide would change and he would be taken out again away from the land. But by sundown he was close enough to see the hibiscus and the frangipani flowers growing on the jungle's edge that came down to the white sands.

When the boat came into shallow water, John Lantin pushed himself over the side with one mighty lunge. His weight capsized the boat. But he pushed himself clear of it and he fought with all his strength to reach the shore, a weary grin upon his bearded face, his huge arms flailing the quiet surf like the arms of a broken windmill.

Lantin fell to his hands and knees when he reached the dry sand. He crawled up several yards, falling twice as he did. Then he turned, sitting, laughing softly, and he started throwing handfuls of sand into the air in his joy and then, grinning, on the very verge of laughter, he collapsed and lay there unconscious, looking for all the world like some fat sea creature that had been washed up dead by the evening tide.

Lantin's eyes opened slowly, almost as if he were just now learning to use them. He saw a thatched roof, point on top, a bamboo pole running the length of what was, as he turned his head slowly to see, a long hut.

He was alive. That was the first thing that came to his mind. And



he was hungry. That came next. He could feel the hunger in his stomach like a small animal gnawing at his insides. He thought of a leg of lamb and then of a bottle of cold beer, with little beads of sweat on the outside. He belched. The belch brought laughter from the other side of the hut. Lantin turned his eyes to the laughter and as he did, the sound became softer.

He saw the girl seated in the doorway, that same damn robin's-egg sky behind her and curving palm leaves a green-golden color in the bright sunlight.

"Well now . . ." Lantin said. His voice sounded much too deep to be his. He cleared his throat. As he did, he saw the fear in the young girl's face. She was sitting there, naked from the waist up.

Lantin grinned at the girl. "You're a pretty one," he said in a quiet voice designed especially not to frighten young girls. He scratched his belly. "And you saved my life, too," he added. "I thank you."

But instead of answering, the girl got up and rushed out of the hut. Lantin groaned. "There must be food," he muttered, turning his head to see what was in the hut.

Moments later, the girl returned with several men and women of her tribe. They stood in the doorway watching Lantin for some time with expressions of wonder upon their dark, handsome faces.

"Good day to you," Lantin said to them in English. But there was no sign that anyone had understood him. "I thank you for saving my life," he said.

Again there was no answer.

He knew some of the native dialect of the region but not very much.

He said, "Food." It was one of the few words he knew.

This time one of the men said something to the girl who had been watching over him and she raced off again. The man said something Lantin could not understand. But when the girl returned with a large wooden platter of pieces of roast pig and big chunks of breadfruit, Lantin grinned, forced himself up into a sitting position and he smiled in his most grateful manner at all the natives.

Two more girls came to his side. One of them started to bathe his face and hands with a damp cloth. When she was finished, the first girl started to feed Lantin, offering him small pieces of meat, placing the meat into his mouth with her fingers. The fat man grinned as his taste buds warmed to the pleasing task ahead. He ate slowly, savoring each bite as if it would be his last.

The second girl at his side held a metal cup which she offered to him between bits of the meat. He drank heartily. It was a milky-tasting liquid and before the meal was over he realised it was the fine native drink, *kava*, that had that most strange quality of leaving a man's head clear while the rest of his body becomes drunk almost to the point of being paralysed.

The meal finished, the three girls set to removing his shirt and trousers. "Now this is the kind of hospitality I like," he said. "You're good girls, all right," he added. "Great white god, you know. That's me. Just remember that." He knew he could not be understood, but he still enjoyed hearing himself talk.

When he was able to get about, he was informed, after a long business of signs and a jumble of words, that there was to be a feast and he was to come to the feast. There was to be much food. He understood what the native said about much food and he grinned and slapped his belly and the native nodded vigorously when Lantin did this.

"Language of all the world — that's what a belly is," Lantin said. The native grinned. "That's what I like about being American," Lantin went on. "We'd rather eat a good meal than sleep any day." He laughed at his own words, nodding, and the native nodded too.

The feast was a dream Lantin seemed to have been pursuing all the years of his life. The platters

of food were without number. Seated next to the tribe's chieftain — a white-haired man named Bintu — Lantin was in the centre of the large circle of men and women around the great fire over which 12 pigs were roasting, the fat dripping down into the yellow flames, snapping there, sending up high bursts of fire into the palm leaves overhead.

Half-naked girls kept bringing platter after platter of food to Lantin and the men of the tribe kept coming to him, bowing in front of him, placing little gifts before him — a mother-of-pearl shell, a metal cup, a necklace of shark's teeth.

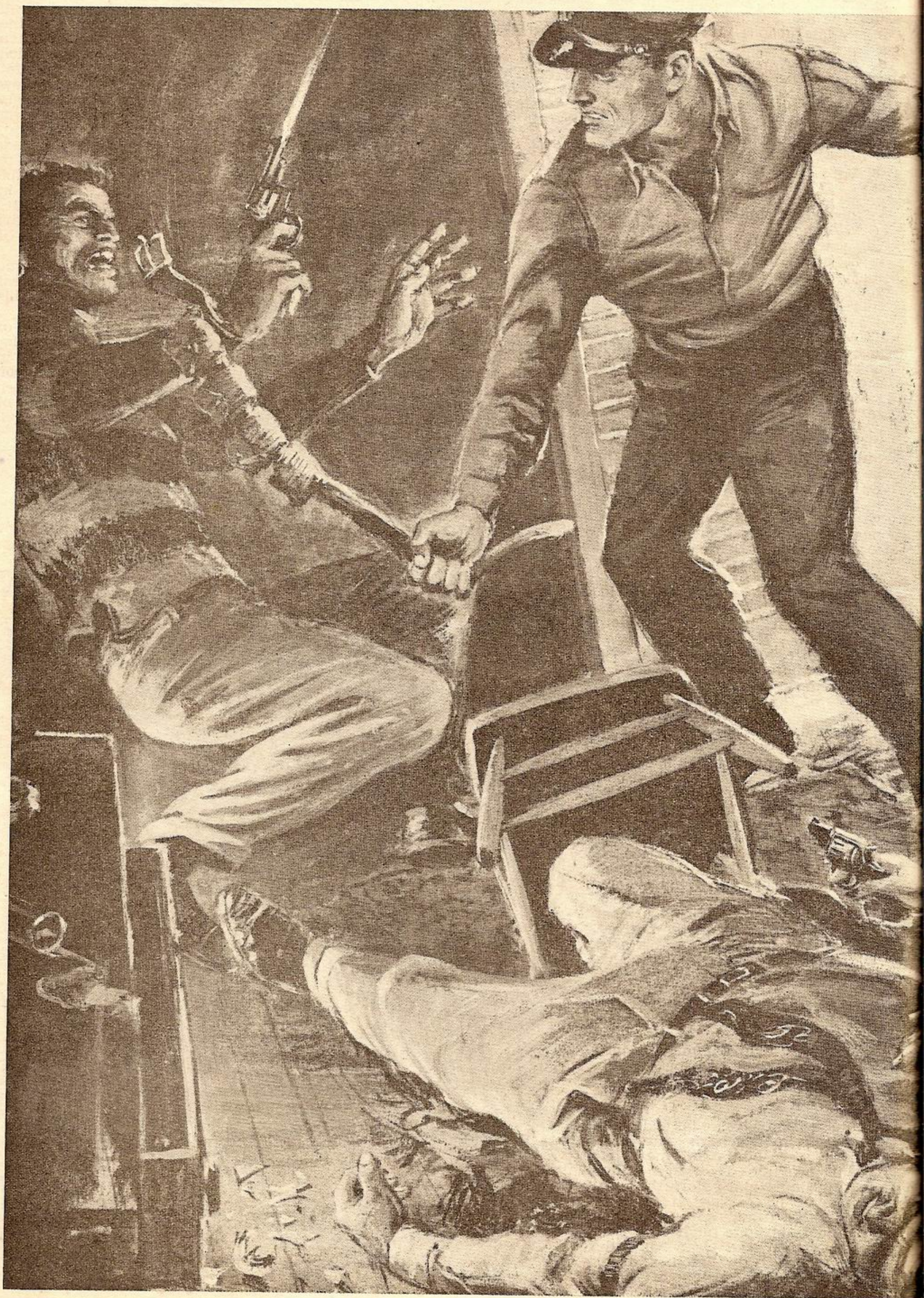
After this continued for some time, Lantin realised that the feast was actually being given in his honor.

The drums started and nine of the loveliest girls of the tribe began dancing — they danced in front of Lantin — their eyes upon only him as they shook their golden bodies to the fantastic rhythms of the drums.

(Continued on page 44)



"Go out there and take their minds off the menus!"



KILLERS

ON HIS TRAIL

FACT • CARL SHERMAN

He was the fourth agent investigating the illegal flow of industrial diamonds out of West Africa. The first three were dead . . .

SHORTLY after the 3000-ton Liverpool freighter, *Donna Luisa*, anchored in Freetown harbor, Sierra Leone, one sticky evening in October, 1956, a sailor hailed a bumboat from the after-deck rail and offered the owner two shillings to row him to the quay. Behaving as does the average seaman when his ship's in port, Jim Woodward was apparently going to grab a few hours' shore leave. Only Jim Woodward was not an "average seaman". A former investigator for the Special Rackets Squad of Chicago, Woodward was on a mission for the Diamond Protective Service, co-operating with Sir Percy Sillitoe's International Diamond Security Organisation.

Already several experienced DPS men had lost their lives attempting to suppress the flood of industrial diamonds that were being smuggled out of the British Protectorate of Sierra Leone to Russia.

Three of these agents had died in Sierra Leone within the past month: In the interior, at Sefadu, near the French Guinea border, John Townsend had "accidentally" fallen into the rock crusher of one of the mines of the Selection Trust. At Bo, while investigating IDBs—illicit diamond buyers purchasing industrial from licensed native diggers—agent P. F. Wingate had turned on the switch in his coupe and had been blown to pieces by a charge of gelignite wired to the starter. The body of the third agent, Henry Caulfield, had been found floating in Freetown harbor. His throat had been cut . . .

The boatman brought Woodward to No 2 quay, pocketed two shillings, and rowed out into the harbor again.

Woodward started out along the quay, heading toward the palm-fringed waterfront. He didn't get very far. Two men were waiting

for him in the darkness on the far side of a palm oil shed. One had a curved knife, the other a length of one-inch pipe.

Over-eager, "one-inch pipe" jumped too soon—and alone. Woodward's reaction was almost automatic. Instead of backing off as anticipated, he ducked forward and to the left. Taking a glancing blow on his shoulder, he brought his knee up sharply into his assailant's groin. The man screamed. Woodward grabbed his wrist, jerking the pipe from his hand. In a rapid movement he whirled, and the pipe struck squarely across the knife-wielder's ear, catching him unexpectedly. He staggered backward, tripped over the stringpiece, and tumbled into the water with a loud splash.

Jim tossed the pipe into the water after him and turned back to the first man, moaning and writhing on the quay. He was a hawk-nosed Lebanese with a knife scar on his right cheek.

Bending over him, Woodward hesitated. Could be that these guys are waterfront thugs teamed up with the boatman to rob sailors, he reflected. So far as he knew only a few top men in DPS and the Special Branch of Scotland Yard knew why he had come to Freetown, and how. It didn't seem likely that the smuggling ring already had killers on his trail.

Leaving hawk-nose on the quay, Woodward headed for the nearest pub, ordered a boilermaker, and dropped a dollar bill on the bar. He gulped the raw rye and moved to the window with the beer chaser in his hand.

Out in the harbor he could see the *Donna Luisa* with floodlights rigged, loading for her turnabout.

Only one thing's certain, Woodward mused, I won't be aboard her in the morning, when she sails.



"The Chairman of the Board asked me a very embarrassing question the other day . . . he wanted me to list all the fixed assets!"

He finished his beer and set out for his real objective, the Star of Beirut Cafe, a noisy, disreputable-looking waterfront dive. According to DPS reports, it was owned by a thickset Lebanese named George Sifak, suspected of being a member of the ring.

Entering the dimly-lit cafe, Woodward selected a small wall table. He ordered straight rye and a waiter brought it to him from the bar. Nursing it, he inspected his surroundings. The room was filled with smoke and reeked of beer and cheap perfume. There were seamen of half a dozen nationalities around him. And several women—dark-skinned, laughing Sierra Leone "creoles", blowsy, gold-toothed Portuguese, a scrawny blonde Cockney who looked as if she had come straight from London's Soho. He dismissed them all with a passing glance.

His eyes brightened when he spotted the object of his search—a pulse-stirring French girl was standing at the end of the bar, chatting idly with the man behind

it. In sweat-damp shirt, with sleeves held above massive forearms by fancy pink garters, the owner, George Sifak, was tending his own bar. Woodward identified the girl from Caulfield's report as Jeanne Duschne. But she was much more attractive than he had pictured.

Getting her attention, he grinned and nodded an invitation. She looked him over in cool, frank appraisal and exchanged a few more words with Sifak before approaching his table. He had a hunch they had been talking about him.

"Buy you a drink?" he asked.

She sat down, crossed her long fine legs and eyed him shrewdly. "You talk like an American, *mon ami*."

She ordered cognac. Her lips were full, her eyes dark and sultry. Woodward noted with approval her figure straining against the confines of her white linen dress. Much too good for this place, he decided. Woodward ordered another round of drinks.

"What else can we do for amuse-

ment?" There was no mistaking his meaning.

"You have 20 dollars, *mon ami*? I have a room upstairs."

"Amusement comes kind of high in Freetown, doesn't it?"

She shrugged her smooth shoulders in a take-it-or-leave-it gesture. "A girl must live, *mon ami*. And I like the look of American money."

Woodward nodded. He had very little money on him—all told, about 25 dollars and some silver. He had left his funds in a London bank and his .38 automatic a little reluctantly with Spencer Merriman, assistant chief of DPS.

"The Ring is smart," grip-haired Merriman had warned him. "Pick up another gun later after they've screened you. But show a roll of bills or carry a gun when you arrive in Freetown and they'll quickly put things together."

He realised he was being subjected to a preliminary screening now, that she was pumping him adroitly in the course of their apparently casual conversation. He fed her the right answers. He was Jim Woodward, seaman aboard the *Donna Luisa*, two weeks out of Liverpool via Lisbon. After awhile he suggested that they go to her room upstairs.

"You become impatient, *mon ami*! First another cognac."

And now we'll get some action, he thought, and warily watched Sifak out of the corner of his eye. He saw the Lebanese's big hand drop furtively below the bar when the waiter repeated their order. Saw him turn his back briefly after reaching for a clean glass. Going to give me the business, Woodward told himself; knockout drops, probably chloral hydrate.

He knew Jeanne Duschne wasn't interested in his 20 dollars. She had other plans for him, if and when she was satisfied he was what he said.

I'm on the right track, he thought elatedly, this is the way the ring recruits its messengers. His heart began pounding a little faster when the waiter placed the drugged rye before him. He had gone as far as the murdered Caulfield. From here on he was on his own.

Jim Woodward was 32. Under his boyish shock of thick brown hair was a mind as sharp and tenacious as a steel trap. His body was lean and hard. A skilled specialist in undercover investigative work, he had been matching wits with foreign agents from West Berlin to Sasebo for more than seven years before arriving in Freetown with seaman's papers supplied by the Special Branch of Scotland Yard.

The Yard had been most cooperative when Diamond Protective Service, London office, mentioned that James W. Woodward was on special assignment.

Sir Percy Sillitoe, former chief of MI-5, the British security force, now heading International Diamond Security Organisation, and Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, director of the De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd, were gravely concerned



"Hey, just a minute! I was here before you."

over the continued large-scale smuggling of industrial diamonds from Sierra Leone.

Despite all security measures taken to curb this illicit activity, more than 30,000,000 dollars worth of industrials had been smuggled out of the West African British Protectorate during the first eight months of 1957.

Both the British and American governments were disturbed to learn the Russians were stockpiling industrial diamonds for the future manufacture of military tools needed in making armaments and guided missiles. The diamonds were, in short, a vital military necessity.

This was no longer a secret. On September 17, 1957, an astute New York Times correspondent, Leonard Ingalls, had cabled a special story from London giving the alarming details.

After it appeared, Washington and London wanted to know why couldn't the smuggling of industrial diamonds to Russia from a British Protectorate be stopped? At this point Spencer Merriman, assistant chief of the Diamond Protectorate Service, had sent for Jim Woodward.

The smuggling of alluvial gem diamonds, flawless whites and blue-whites, found in beds of gravel only a few feet below ground surface, was an old story in Sierra Leone. Such diamond smuggling has been going on in the Protectorate for a long time and represented more than 2,000,000 dollars yearly loss of export duty payment to the government. The large scale smuggling of tiny industrials was more recent.

"Our people have been trying to find out how the Russians are getting the industrials out," Merri-

man told Woodward. "We'd like you to have a go at it in your own way. But not as one of our own agents. The Russians, unfortunately, have spotted too many of them. Of course you'll have full co-operation from us and from MI-5. From your own government, too, if you need it."

Merriman was an old hand with industrial diamond warfare and smuggling. He had been one of the planners of the daring raid in 1940 when the British succeeded in preventing a 10,000,000 dollar stockpile of industrials in Amsterdam, Holland, from falling into Hitler's hands. But, as he quickly pointed out to Woodward, this wasn't to be any such slambang operation. It called for subtlety and finesse. An agent would have to work his way into the ring itself, logically, as a courier.

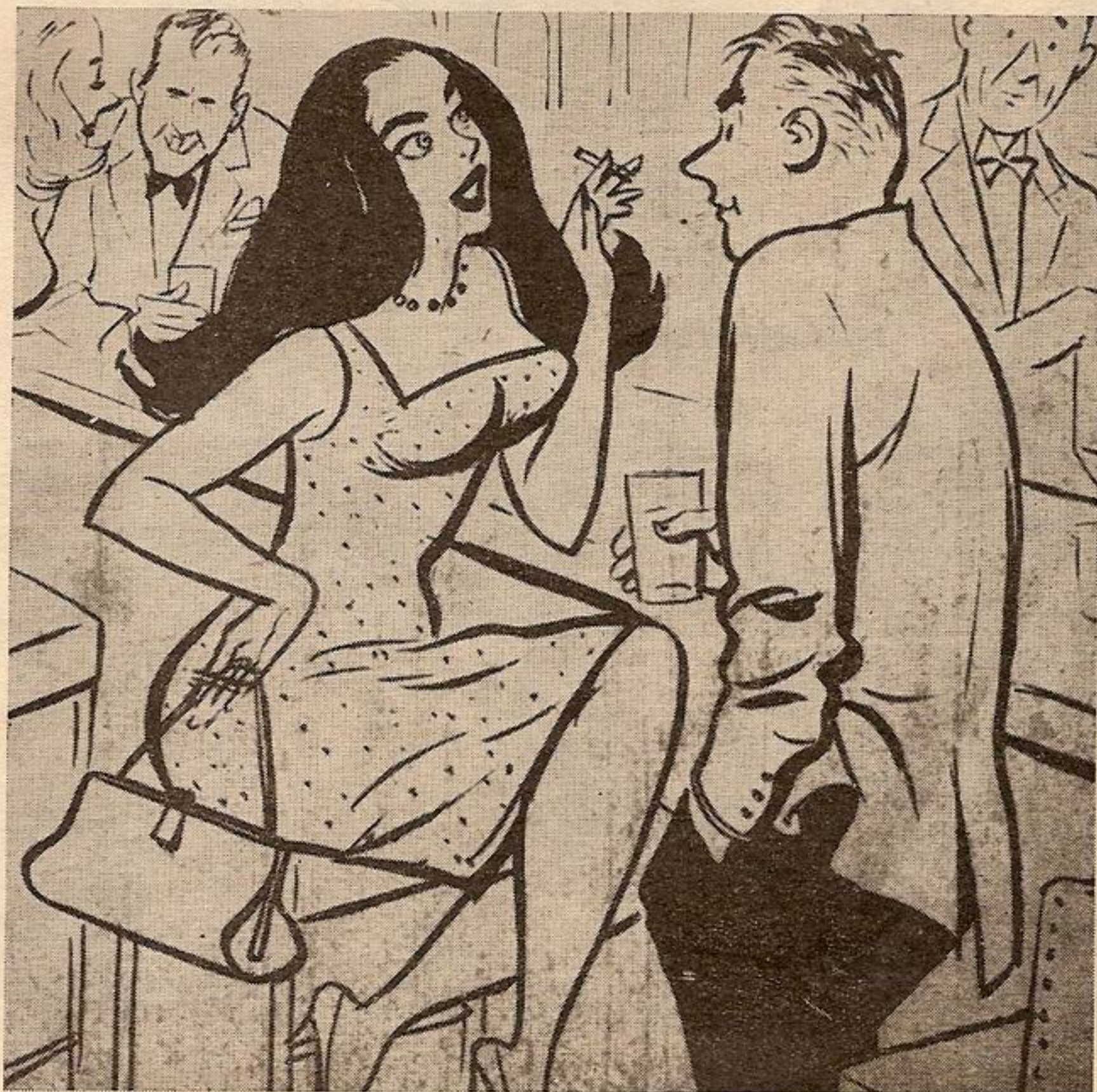
"Maybe these will be of some help," he suggested, and handed Woodward the DPS-Sierra Leone reports to study.

Woodward went through them carefully. They revealed a losing battle against smuggling all the way. Hundreds of unlicensed diggers had been arrested. In August, 1957, alone, more than 50,000 would-be poachers had been routed out of restricted diamond-bearing areas by police and watchful guards. Scores of IDBs, mostly Lebanese, had been apprehended.

In the big diamond workings of the Selection Trust, supervision over workers had been tightened. Suspects were not only thoroughly searched, but subjected to the X-ray and physic treatment as well. Nevertheless, the smuggling continued.

The report was as discouraging as it was lengthy. Not until the very last paragraph did a hopeful gleam appear in Woodward's eyes. He read it again:

(Continued on page 49)



"All men are liars! What I want to know is are you a rich liar?"

THE AMBASSADOR WHO DID

"Snowy" Baker was one of the greatest unofficial ambassadors Australia could ever hope to have. His unspoilt love of Australia and his prodigious versatility in the world of sport made him a truly great man.



Baker founded the Riviera Country Club when he decided to take up residence in Los Angeles. He was a champion polo player and always used his favorite horse, Boomerang.

ON a crisply chill winter morning 50-odd years ago George Baker returned from his customary pre-breakfast walk and said to his wife, "Darling, I fear it is all over."

He embraced and kissed her. Then he kissed his daughter, shook hands with his five sons, stretched out on his bed with hands crossed on his chest and closed his eyes.

In less than 10 minutes he was dead.

He was 92 years old and, though his death tore their hearts, his adoring family was comforted by the manner of his going. For Papa Baker, a six-foot Limerick Irishman who became a fiercely patriotic Australian had fully earned the reward of slipping away without pain, without lingering illness. His life had been full of splendid achievement. He had contributed much to the community welfare, both as a private citizen and as a zealous toiler in the City of Sydney's employ. He was an outstanding horseman in a day when all but beggars went on horseback. He was a superb all-round athlete. His most notable accomplishment, however, was the begetting of five sons who, between them, dominated practically every field of sport, from Rugby football to fencing.

The most distinguished of these was Reginald Leslie, universally known as "Snowy" Baker, who still leads the phantom parade of Australia's many great versatile sportsmen. "Snowy" Baker's incredible sporting exploits probably outweigh those of the legendary American Indian, Jim Thorpe, who, Americans will argue, was history's greatest athletic all-rounder.

This is the "Snowy" Baker story. "Snowy" himself, however, insisted that the story could never adequately be told without mention of some of the deeds of his brothers or without tribute to the venerable sire who cultivated their inherent athletic qualities.

So, with proper respect for "Snowy's" judgment, one observes these requirements. The effectiveness of his father's family guidance is best assessed by quoting "Snowy's" own words to an interviewer when he last visited Sydney from his California home 18 months before his death in December, 1953.

"Father," he said, "was a splendid athlete and sportsman and the greatest influence in my athletic

NOT COME HOME

life. He came from Limerick to Australia in the gold rush days. Afterwards he took a job as a City Council inspector, married a Sydney girl and settled in a big house in Womerah Avenue, Darlinghurst, to accommodate the large family they planned to raise. The family eventually consisted of father, mother, five boys, one girl, about a dozen dogs, two monkeys, a koala bear and several horses.

"The boys' welfare was exclusively mother's responsibility until we were each eight years old. Father always said no child had any muscular co-ordination at an earlier age.

"From our eighth birthdays onwards he took over our physical education. He taught us to swim, ride, and box, a course of vigorous daily exercises and a code for living to keep us morally and physically fit.

"He took us riding every morning and he taught us to swim and dive at Farmer's Woolloomooloo baths. We took our boxing lessons from him in the backyard.

"Father rode with one or another of us every day until he was 89 years old. Then he began to feel his years and feared that he might slip from the saddle — he could never be happy on anything but a lively horse, you see. So, instead of a daily gallop, he took a strenuous five-mile daily walk before breakfast. He took his walk every day up to, and including, the day he died."

"Snowy" then described his father's dramatic farewell and peaceful death.

George Baker reaped a rich harvest from the seeds of manly endeavor he sowed in his sons. "Snowy" excelled in 19 different sports, both in national and international competition, and became one of the world's most renowned horsemen. Fred fought his way to the welterweight boxing championship of NSW. Harald represented Australia at Rugby Union, held the national amateur heavyweight boxing title and was the Australasian sprint swimming champion as well as captain of Australia's water polo team. The awkwardly-built Ernest was too clumsy for outstanding success at field games but distinguished himself as a sculler and rower. Frank, the youngest, did exceptionally well at most sports and later became a polished character actor in Hollywood.

Reginald Leslie, universally known as "Snowy" Baker, was the most distinguished of the five Baker brothers who, between them, dominated practically every field of sport, from sparring to swimming.



One would need remarkable talents to gain distinction in such an athletically-gifted family. "Snowy" had the facility not only to do this but to become internationally celebrated in every sporting field to which he turned his efforts.

"Snowy" was immensely proud to be an Australian. He demonstrated his truly Australian character in refusing to become "Americanised" in his 30-odd years of residence in Los Angeles. He contrived to remain permanently in the United States without surrendering his Australian citizenship by visiting Mexico for just long enough each year to qualify for another 12 months' visitor's visa to the US.

The grounds of his spacious ranch-type home, called The Gunyah, were planted with Australian eucalypts and gums. His favorite horses bore such Australian names as Boomerang, Wallaroo, Dandnong and Cootamundra. As equestrian director of the Riviera Country Club he helped to found on Los Angeles' outskirts he taught famous film stars, among many others, to ride in the Australian manner in an Australian-type saddle, so that they might sit comfortably in America's top-flight polo competition. His film star polo pupils included Will Rodgers Snr, Wallace Beery, Douglas Fairbanks Snr, William S. Hart and Tom Mix. (Hart and Mix, he recalled, looked upon polo as "kinda sissified" horsemanship.)

Other famous movie stars he taught to ride, though not to play polo, included Joan Crawford and Spencer Tracy. He considered Tracy, whose close friend he became one of his best pupils. "He was born to the saddle," said "Snowy". "He would have been in his element in an Australian cattle

round-up in wild bush country."

"Snowy" was a genius with the stockwhip. He was the only man in the world, at that time anyway, who could effectively wield a 36 ft whip in each hand simultaneously. He taught William S. Hart to use the stockwhip for scenes in a film called "Tumbleweed" and Fairbanks to use it for "The Mark of Zorro", one of his most famous films.

All these of "Snowy's" activities, you will note, were distinctly Australian. Their undertaking gave "Snowy" endless opportunity to express his faith and pride in the Australian way of outdoorsmanship.

As final proof of his intense Australianism his speech bore no taint of American accent when he visited Sydney in June, 1952, for the first time in 20 years. Moreover, he was the same courteous, unassuming, quietly-spoken man his friends remembered parting with many years before.

"Snowy" Baker established himself as a sporting celebrity while still a schoolboy. A pupil at Crown Street Public School, Sydney, he won the all-schools track championship of 1898. In the following year, at the age of 16, he was chosen as half-back for the State Rugby Union team. A year later, still as half-back, he represented Australia against England's touring Rugby Union side.

He was proclaimed on all sides as a track athlete and footballer of extraordinary ability and even greater promise. In the next six years, however, his prodigious versatility astounded even those who had predicted a brilliant sporting career for him.

He rowed in a championship-eight four times in two years. He won 40 individual swimming titles

and was a member of a swimming team called 'The Flying Squad' that remained unbeaten in relay competition from 1901 to 1904. He was also a member of an unbeaten water polo team from 1903 to 1906.

In this same six-year period Baker entered competitive amateur boxing. He won the Australian middleweight championship in his third bout in one night—in the two earlier matches he had disposed of opponents in the interstate quarter-final and semi-final.

Meanwhile, he continued to perform with outstanding skill in track athletics, swimming, diving, football, rowing, wrestling, equestrian events, gymnastics and fencing.

He was an especially polished horseman. If one could single out any as his best sporting achievement horsemanship probably would win the vote. He won almost every jumping, hunting, cross-

country and trick riding event he entered.

"Snowy" was chosen to represent Australia in boxing at the 1908 Olympic Games, in London. Boxing in the middleweight division he eliminated two ex-champions in early-round matches, won the semi-final with four punches and shaped up in the final to the famous cricketer J. W. H. T. Douglas—whom Sydney Cricket Ground Hillites dubbed Johnny-Won't-Hit-Today when he led an England team in a Test series in Australia.

Baker and Douglas each fought so well that the spectators were equally divided in trying to pick the winner. To the astonishment of those who plumped for Baker the referee gave Douglas the verdict. Now this decision might have remained one of the many unresolved arguments that feature in boxing history if it had not been for the fact that the referee was Johnny Douglas's father. Boxing fans who disagreed with the ver-

dict quickly seized on the relationship to accuse Douglas, senior, of partisanship.

The argument continued unsatisfied, at all social levels of boxing following, until Baker and Douglas were both guests at an exclusive London club dinner—a very posh black-tie affair. After the meal the argument flamed. Guests asked both Douglas and Baker their opinions of who really won the fight. Each, of course, declared for himself.

This difference of opinion could be settled in only one way. The contestants removed their dinner jackets and boiled shirts and shaped up to fight it out. Baker knocked out Douglas inside two rounds. That seemed to settle the argument. But the melancholy fact remains that the name of Douglas, not Baker, appears in the record book as Olympic middleweight champion of 1908.

This encounter and its cause is often quoted in Olympic Council circles as the perfect precedent for never again permitting the appointment of a contestant's relative as a referee or judge at any future Games event.

When "Snowy" returned to Australia from the London Games he opened a physical culture school in Sydney and published a sporting magazine. He also entered the promotional side of boxing as one of the original syndicate that built the Sydney Stadium in 1908 for the world heavyweight championship match between Tommy Burns, the holder, and Jack Johnson, the challenger, held on Boxing Day of that year.

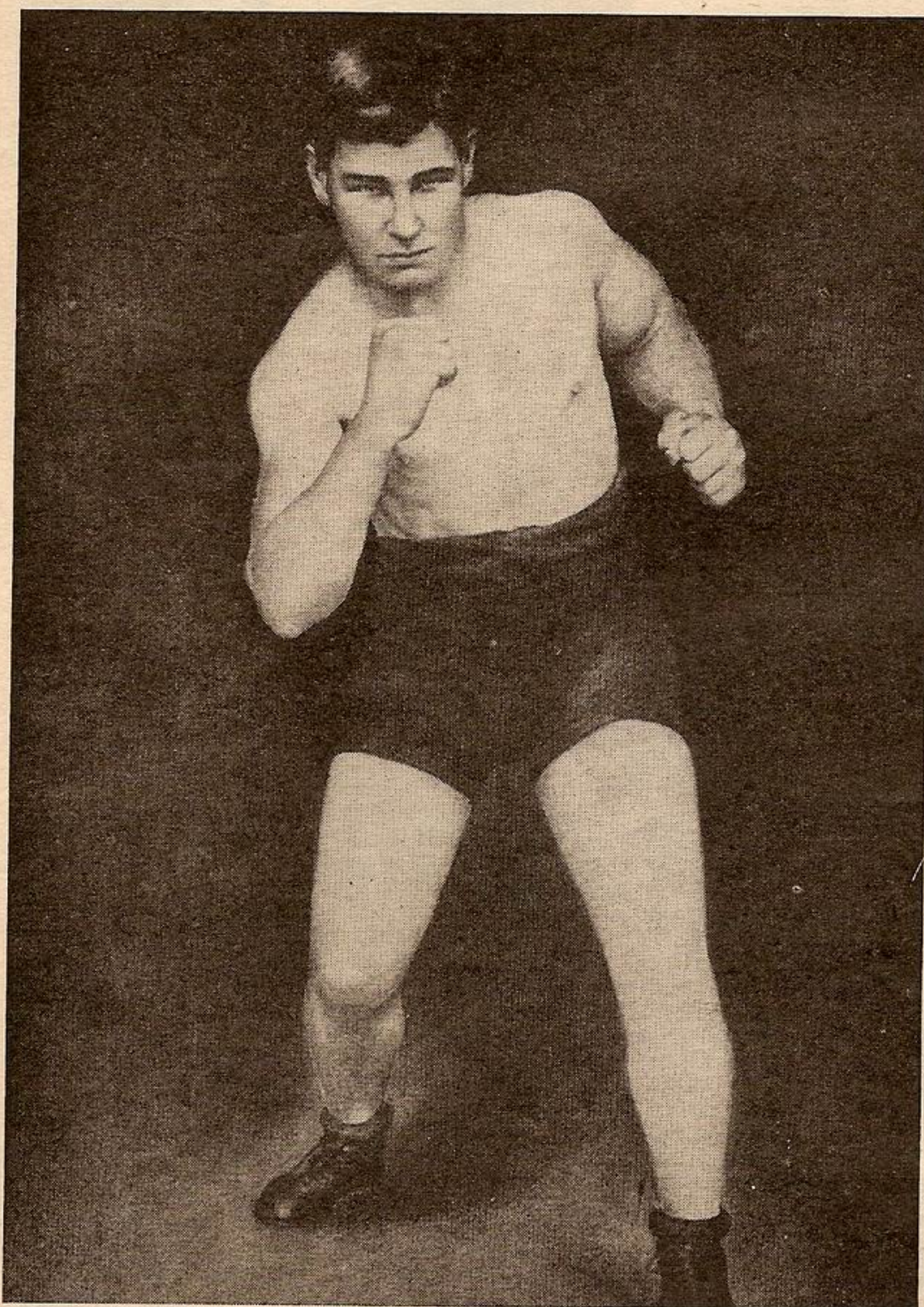
"Snowy" was to referee that fight but Johnson adamantly drew a "color-line" against him. After regarding with obvious distaste "Snowy's" crop of very blond—almost white—hair, Johnson declared, "I don't like white-headed men and I won't go into the ring with a blond referee."

"Snowy" recalled, "I pointed out that the color of my hair could have nothing to do with my ability as a referee. But Johnson had a mule streak a mile wide. He wouldn't have me at any price. McIntosh—Hugh D. McIntosh, one of the stadium-building syndicate—flew into a rage and threatened Johnson with all kinds of vengeance. He even tried to bluff Johnson with a gun. But Johnson dug his toes in."

"As a result of Johnson's stand I watched the slaughter from the ringside with McIntosh himself as the third man."

"It was a one-sided affair from the start. Johnson, with his ebony head and golden teeth gleaming in the sun, taunted poor Tommy as he chopped the white man to pieces. 'You ain't showed me nothin',' he said, laughing, as Burns vainly tried to hit him. Police stopped it in the 14th round."

This fight established a golden era of boxing in Australia. In the next few years "Snowy" brought to Australia such boxers as Eddie



One of "Snowy's" most vivid memories was of the stadium crowd's riot when his brother Harald, as referee, crowned Fritz Holland the winner against Les Darcy, shown above, in Darcy's first Sydney Stadium fight.

McGoorty, Jimmy Clabbe, Billy Papke, Cyclone Jimmy Thompson, George Chip, Jeff Smith, Ray Bronson, Melburn Sailor, Matt Wells, Owen Moran, Jim Sullivan and others of equally great stature. On the local scene were such men as Les Darcy, Hughie Mehegan, Fred Kay, Herb McCoy, Alf Morey, Jerry Jerome and numerous other scrappers of international class.

One of "Snowy's" most vivid memories was of a stadium crowd's riot when his brother Harold, as referee, crowned American Fritz Holland the winner against Les Darcy in Darcy's first Sydney Stadium fight.

A good three-parts of the capacity audience had come from Newcastle, Maitland and precincts to see the 19-year-old local boy Darcy in his Sydney debut. This was the night of July 18, 1914.

Darcy and Holland fought a mighty battle, fighting toe-to-toe almost throughout the 20 rounds. It might have been anybody's fight. But Harold Baker gave Holland the verdict.

"Hell broke loose," Snowy" said "Mobs of tough looking miners from Newcastle and Maitland stormed the ring, threatening my brother with all kinds of violence. Bottles flew through the air. I stopped one between the shoulder blades. Ringsiders scampered for cover.

"Hotheads gathered' newspapers into piles and set them alight.



Hugh D. McIntosh, one of the stadium-building syndicate, was called in to referee the Jack Johnson - Tommy Burns fight in 1908. Johnson refused to allow "Snowy" to act as third man.



"Snowy" Baker returned to Australia from California in 1952. He was recognised everywhere as a deathless hero of Australian sport. Sydney tendered him an official civic welcome.

They broke up seats to feed the fires.

"Firemen used their hoses to break up the rioting groups, then put out the fires.

"But that wasn't the end of it. The mobs gathered outside and began to stone the windows. I was in the office with the Governor-General, Sir Ronald Munro-Fergus-

son, when stones came crashing through the windows. We ducked under the oak desk for cover. As we crouched there Sir Roland turned his head to me and said with a grin, 'Quite a night, Baker. Quite a night.'

"It was, indeed, quite a night."

With typical Baker courage Harold again crowned Holland the winner in his second fight with Darcy, ruling that Darcy had fouled his opponent. This time the crowd loyally booed the verdict but refrained from rioting.

This would be an appropriate point at which to put on record another of Harold Baker's heroic performances. Long before surf life saving became an organised movement in New South Wales Harold was a member of the Maroubra Surfing Club, whose members camped at the beachside each weekend and took upon themselves the task of safeguarding bathers against their own foolhardiness. He later moved to Coogee where he joined the local club.

On Saturday, January 28, 1911, Harold was standing fully dressed near the beach when he saw a group of bathers being carried in the strong tide toward a notorious danger area, where a treacherous undertow ran into a channel.

He was on the point of running to the water edge to call a warning to the bathers when they began to scream and signal for help as they felt themselves being drawn into the undertow.

Baker ran across the beach, plunged into the surf fully clothed and swam to the distressed group. About 200 yards out he grabbed an exhausted girl and made back toward the beach with her.

Meanwhile his friend and fellow international footballer Jim Clarksen donned a belt, called on some bystanders to man the lifeline and joined in the rescue. He was halfway from the beach to the group



Baker was an expert horseman and delighted in tricks such as these cowboys are enjoying — sliding on cow hides behind galloping horses.

when Baker handed him the girl to take back to the beach then swam out to bring in more people.

The trapped bathers were now drifting farther out and weakening under the pounding of giant waves. Baker reached a group of three women. They grabbed at him frantically, nearly strangling him. He had no alternative but to knock each of them unconscious with a blow to the chin. Then he brought them toward the beach until he again met Clarksen, some distance out, and asked him to take the three women in.

Clarksen, however, could not manage them all so Baker helped him until they were in shallow water. There he stripped off all his clothing to prevent frantically clutching hands from dragging him down. Then he swam out and brought in two more women.

Between them, Baker and Clarksen brought in 12 of the 13 bathers who were in difficulties. The 13th, a man, was swept far out to sea. His body was washed ashore several days later.

Though near exhaustion from their long swims and struggles with the people they were trying to save, Baker and Clarksen toiled for hours with artificial resuscitation to revive the worst affected. In spite of their efforts, four died.

Such is the stuff the Bakers were made of.

The Royal Humane Society awarded Baker and Clarksen medals for their heroism. Their bravery was widely acclaimed. In spite of this Baker could not escape the stern censure of a section of the community for having stripped off his clothing in the public view.

An important consequence of the

incident was a meeting of all life-saving clubs to organise a system of volunteer weekend lifesaving patrols at metropolitan surfing beaches.

Soon after his fight promotion venture "Snowy" Baker became interested in local movie-making. With E. J. Carroll he was one of the pioneering teams of Australian film makers. He was a ready-made star for the venture, playing the lead in Hopalong Cassidy-type films in an Australian setting. Baker starred in "The Enemy Within", "The Man From Kangaroo", "The Lure of The Bush" and "The Shadow of Lightning Ridge". "Snowy's" co-star in these films was his magnificent grey horse, Boomerang, which he later took to America where they both played in films.

"Snowy" remained a film actor until he helped to establish the Riviera Country Club in the early 1930s. The emphasis of the Country Club's activities was on equestrian sports. "Snowy" personally met the demand to tutor many aspiring members. He found this work so satisfying that he made his home in Los Angeles, where the climate and surrounding countryside was so reminiscent of his beloved Australia. So "Snowy" Baker became in truth a little part of Australia in a foreign land.

"Snowy" had married, in 1908, the widow of Dr Gus Kearney, who had been a prominent Melbourne athlete. He had no children of his own but raised his step-daughters, Joan and Margaret, with a natural father's devotion.

When homesickness finally brought him back to Sydney in 1952 "Snowy" came alone. And he

came off the aircraft that brought him from America as a stretcher patient. This alarmed old friends waiting at the airport to greet him but "Snowy" was merely the victim of severe air sickness.

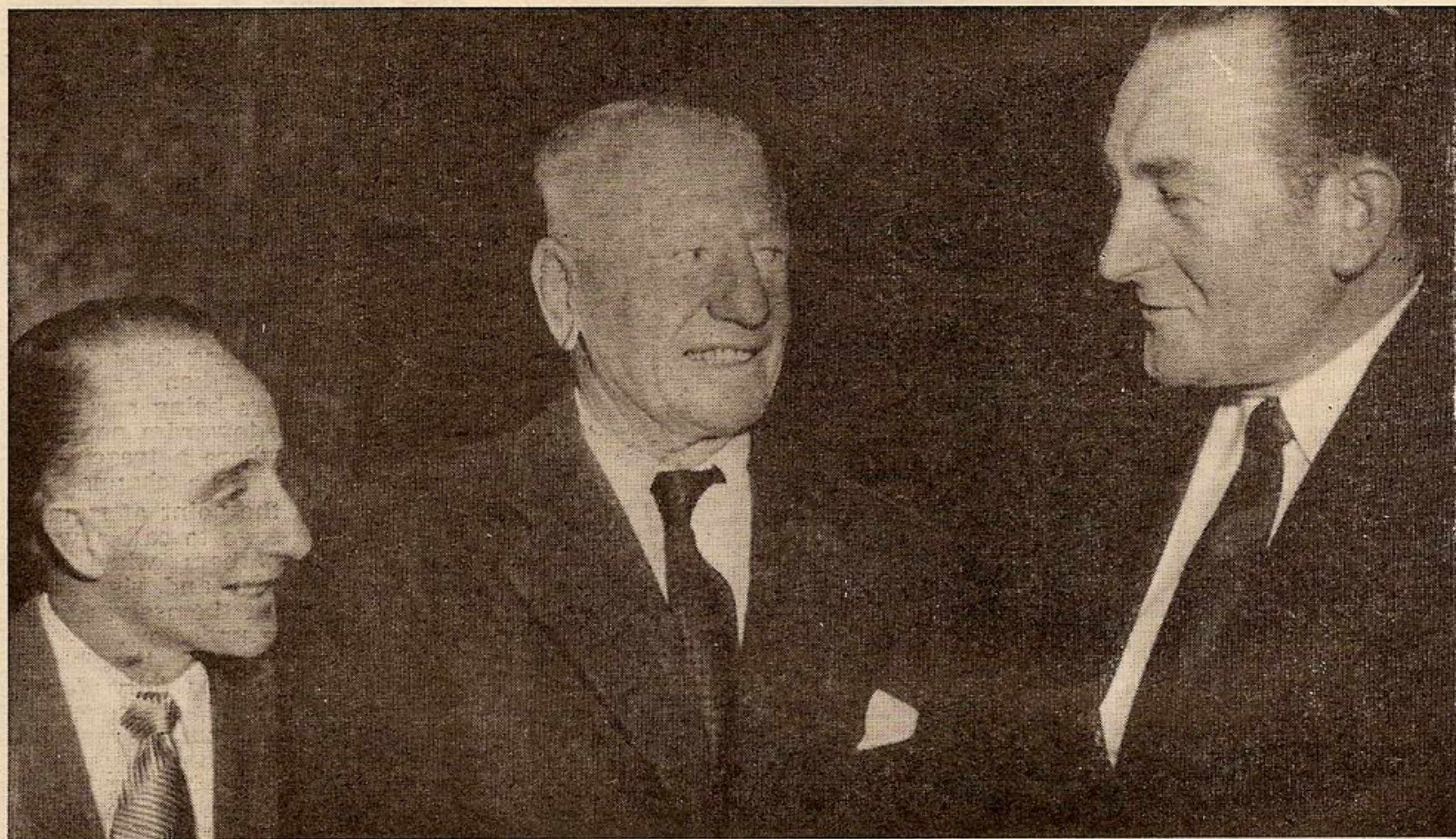
"I never suffered like this from riding a buckjumper," he groaned as they carried him from the plane.

"Snowy" quickly recovered and was feted wherever he went as a deathless hero of Australian sport. Lord Mayor Ernie O'Dea expressed Sydney's joy at having him home once again by tendering him a civic welcome. The most distinguished sportsmen of the day—both practising and retired—honored him at another reception at Sydney's Tattersall's Club. Strangers stopped him in the street to shake his hand. He made a radio broadcast as the ABC's guest of honor.

"Snowy" reacted typically. "I'm coming home for the rest of my days," he said. "As soon as my wife, who was too ill to make this trip with me, is fit to travel we'll be here to live among our own people."

"Snowy" had sound advice to offer young people who would keep themselves healthy in mind, body and good citizenship. Though by no means a crank on the subject he disapproved alcohol and tobacco. He considered both hampered an athlete not only in sporting performance but in his preparation for it. And sport, in his view, was essential to all as a matchless character-builder.

"Sport teaches a man to take hard knocks," he said. "Everybody should play as many sports as possible." He singled out swim-



On his return to Australia, Baker was given a reception at Sydney's Tattersall's Club, by the most distinguished sportsmen of the day — both practising and retired. He is seen here with jockey Billy Cook and tennis star Jack Crawford.

ming as the most physically beneficial of all sports.

Though he never regretted his own lifetime teetotalism he once had cause to reflect on it.

He was travelling to England in 1907 to take part in the English boxing championships. When his ship was at Port Said a couple of shipboard friends persuaded him to visit a pub with them. He withstood their pressing invitations to take just one little drink. "Snowy" enjoyed the visit and his friends' company but stuck strictly to water.

"At the end of the trip they carried me ashore on a stretcher," he recalled. "I had typhoid. The doctors said I'd caught it from drinking water at Port Said."

On another occasion "Snowy" unwittingly acquired a hangover, the discomfort of which banished any doubts his typhoid attack might have implanted about the wisdom of his teetotalism.

"They offered me whisky at a reception I attended in Finland," he said. "I refused. Then someone said, 'Try this—it's teetotal.' I tried a glass and liked it very much. So I had another. Then another. Then I fell off my chair."

"When they sat me up I was feeling really frisky and in need of exercise. A local bigwig, all done up in a fancy uniform including sword, was nearby. I grabbed his sword and made a few fencing passes at him."

"Under the influence of the fancy drink that inspired all this my eye wasn't as sharp as it should have been nor was my hand as steady as when I went through sword drill with the New South Wales Lancers. So in one lunge I stuck the sword an inch or so into the uniformed gentleman's stomach."

"I'll never forget the start it gave me when I saw blood spread over his uniform."

"They put us both in hospital for four days—me to recover from some strange affliction and the victim of his own sword in my unsteady hand from the pinking. We were in the same hospital room and left it firm friends. All was forgiven, if not forgotten."

The mystery was unravelled for "Snowy" when he learned that the "teetotal" drink he had taken at the reception was a Swedish punch strongly laced with alcohol.

"Snowy" returned to California from his 1952 visit to Sydney vowing that he would return to settle enough to travel.

But he never did. Soon after his arrival back in California he was stricken from an illness from which he died in March, 1953.

He was 69. His body was cremated at Beverly Hills and his ashes were installed in an urn in the Hollywood Memorial Centre.

So "Snowy" Baker, a fiercely-proud Australian, never did come home to live. But the Australian eucalypts and gums he planted in the grounds of The Gunyah flourish as his memorial. ●



The boy from the Maitland district farm, Les Darcy, took his first unsteady steps on the ladder of fame, while "Snowy" Baker was promoting box-office fights at the Sydney Stadium.



J. W. H. T. Douglas — nicknamed Johnny Won't Hit Today — was one of the greats in English cricket. His father, refereeing the middleweight championship of 1908, awarded the fight to Douglas although Baker's fans didn't agree.



SONG OF LIFE

Sing low,
Sing high,
Sing sweet and soft —
Of glamor
And of love . . .
Of romance
And the light of stars —
The moon that shines above . .
All are in tune
All fit the song
A lovely lady sings.



CHARTERED FOR DEATH

Nobody had to tell him that good-looking dolls mean trouble. But when death strikes three times in the one night . . . that's carrying the odds too far!

THE first things that Donovan saw when he came off the tarmac into the airport lounge were the legs. Their owner's face was hidden by the gaudily colored travel brochure she was reading, but even if it hadn't, it would have been quite a while before Donovan got around to it. The legs were covered in sheerest nylon and were long and finely tapered to tiny ankles and delicately arched feet. The fashionable shortness and tightness of their owner's skirt and her position in the lounge chair were enough to drive the average male cross-eyed in an endeavor to see just how long the legs were.

Donovan was no exception to the average. In fact, the legs had taken their owner half-way across the lounge before he realized that the gauzy strip of cloth trailing across the arm of the chair also belonged to her.

In three seconds flat Donovan was tapping her gently on the shoulder, and saying, "You left your scarf behind, Miss—?" He raised his voice to a question on the "Miss".

The girl turned sharply, showing bright blue eyes and a face that matched up nicely with her legs. "Why, so I did," she said, in a deep, husky voice that made each word a promise that Donovan hoped the speaker knew all about. "How careless of me. And how nice of you to return it Mr—?" She ignored Donovan's curiosity and showed a little of her own.

From then on, to a man of Donovan's accomplishments, it was a piece of cake. Half an hour later they were sitting over drinks in the city. In another half an hour, in return for only the information he'd deduced from gazing at her legs, Donovan had divulged that he was an airline owner-pilot on a special charter to take the very latest model Australian made car to a rich Nabob in Malaysia. Can you blame him if he kept quiet about the fact that the airline consisted of one battered old

Dakota held together by wire and hope, and that he'd taken the charter at a ruinous price simply to keep eating and flying. After all, as he reasoned he was taking her on her legs; let her take him on his airline.

After this one-sided exchange of confidences things slowed down a little while they concentrated on their drinks. The girl herself restarted progress by asking Donovan which hotel he was at.

He laughed. "Hotel, me? No such luck. I've got to tuck the old bus in and sit by her." Implying, of course, that his precious plane and cargo could not be left unattended overnight.

The girl accepted this thoughtfully. "Well," she said, slowly, "If you really have to get back to the airport, we'd better pack it up. We'll go back to my hotel room for a nightcap and then I'll drive you out."

There was no nightcap, of course, or any other covering for that matter. The action began the moment they walked from the long veranda into her room and she closed the French windows firmly behind him. The gauze scarf, the cause of their meeting, was the first to go. In the darkness the silken whisper and slide of material told Donovan that much more personal items were following it. By that time he was pretty busy himself.

It wasn't love, it was war. A war undertaken in pitch darkness. A battle of ambushes and retreats and fierce hand to hand conflicts fought in almost complete silence. One hell of an experience, Donovan mused at dawn next morning as he sat on the side of the wrecked bed and studied the curled, sleeping tigress, who had been his opponent — but not an experience I'd care to repeat. At least, not for 24 hours or so, he amended, grinning to himself. And then he silently donned his scattered clothes and, carrying his shoes in his hand, let himself out through the French windows. With Donovan the char-

ter came first, well, most of the time.

It was Donovan's own fault that the two men took him so easily on a night six weeks after the episode with the girl. He'd been drinking in a gin mill off a dirty back alley and the fine edge of his alertness had been drowned in rot-gut whisky. When he left the bar and walked out into the dark and almost deserted street and the two men began to shoulder him he was slow enough to think they were just pavement hoppers. He gave one of them a vicious jolt with his elbow that sent him gasping against the wall. Then his ear caught the swish of a sap and he ducked. The sap scraped the side of his head and landed on his shoulder with numbing force. He struck out blindly, sinking his fist in a man's belly and then the sap came down again.

"Don't kill him," a faintly familiar voice called softly, and then the dirty garbage-littered pavement came up and hit him in the face.

When he came to he was lying on the cold concrete floor of what appeared to be a basement room. A dirty, fly-specked bulb showed the room to be bare — but for the two cement tubs and a row of set-in cupboards. The door was of heavy oak with a spyhole like a cell door. The two men were there. One a youngish, weakly-handsome man of the type women have a motherly feeling for, was a stranger to Donovan. He knew the other one, though, and the who's business still didn't begin to make sense.

This other one, a middle-aged man neatly dressed in the pinstripe suit and sober shirt of the successful businessman, spoke first, "Ah, Mr Donovan, back with us I see. I presume you remember me?"

Donovan held his aching head and sat up. He waited until the room stopped spinning and then he said, very carefully: "I remember you, Banks, and you won't be forgetting me either."



Waugh



"Given the proper tools, Henry can ruin anything."

"No, Mr Donovan, I'm not likely to forget you, you cheap hijacker." Banks turned to the other man. "John, I have some private business to discuss with this rat. You can leave us." The other man hesitated and Banks reached into his pocket and hauled out a flat black .38. "Don't worry about leaving me alone with him. Mr Donovan is not feeling so tough right now."

They waited, studying each other in silence until John left the room, closing the door behind him. Banks cleared his throat as though he was going to address a board meeting. "And now, Mr Donovan," he said, primly, "we have a little business to discuss. Six weeks ago I chartered your plane to deliver a new car to a friend of mine in Malaysia. Mr Donovan, I want that car. You can tell me where it is now, or you can make it hard for yourself. I don't much care which way you choose, but rest assured that I'm going to get it."

Donovan's mouth fell open. "You're off your rocker, Buddy. Why come to me for a car that was delivered in Malaysia three days after I took the charter?"

Banks twisted his thin lips in a grimace that might have been a smile. "Oh yes, you were clever, Donovan. You did deliver a car, all right — but it wasn't the car you were supposed to deliver. That's the one I want."

"You're crackers," Donovan told him. "Stark staring crackers. I don't know what the hell you're talking about."

Banks sighed. "Ah yes, loss of memory. I was afraid of that. Still, I think a little starvation might cure it. I hope it does, Mr Donovan, otherwise you'll lie here till you rot."

"Mister," Donovan said sourly, "Get the hell out of here, you're delaying my rotting."

Banks showed his teeth. "I hope you stay brave on an empty stom-

ach." He went to the door and called for the other man. When he came they held a whispered consultation inaudible to Donovan, then he went away again. He was back in a few minutes with a long length of flex, apparently a mechanic's light lead, for it still had a plug on one end. While Banks watched, John tied Donovan, very efficiently, legs and feet, then rolled him carelessly into the corner by the cement tubs, against the wall furthest from the door, and let him lie there.

"Mister," Donovan spat. "You'd do better to take that gun and blow my head off. I'll follow you to hell and back."

"You're in no position to threaten anyone," Banks answered mildly. "You'd be better occupied reviving your lost memory." They walked to the door where Banks turned. "If you're thinking or making a noise to attract attention, Mr Donovan, save your breath. We have no near neighbors and the only two residents, apart from myself, are John here, my chauffeur, and my personal secretary. I pay them well enough to make them solicitous of my welfare." The peep-hole door closed behind them with soft finality.

A long, long time later Donovan was free. The skin of his wrists and hands was tattered and bleeding, his head throbbed like the grandfather of all hangovers and he was chilled to the bone by the icy concrete floor — but he was free.

High on the wall, just above outside ground level, was a small square of cobwebbed window. By climbing on the cement tubs and stretching Donovan could see the outside world. It was a peaceful scene. Down at the further end of a paved patio the man, John, was washing a gleaming black sedan.



"Follow that car!"

Nearer at hand, in the shadow of a gaudy beach umbrella, Banks was dictating letters to his secretary. Donovan watched them for a time, cursing under his breath. Then the strain of his position began to pull at his tired muscles and he let himself back to the floor.

It was then he saw the power point, in the wall under the tubs. He studied it, whistling under his breath. At last he began to smile. He arranged the long piece of flex as he wanted it, and he still had enough slack to fool any but a close observer into believing he was still bound. He settled himself in his original position on the floor and tried to relax, but inwardly he was in a fever of impatience. "Come along, Mr Banks," he said softly to himself. "I'll try to give you a warm welcome."

Banks was in no hurry to be welcomed. The day had long gone before a faint rustle of movement at the door told Donovan that someone was eyeing him through the peephole. He lay quite still for what seemed an eternity, and then a key grated in the lock and the door began to swing back. Banks was taking no chances. He stood half-way into the room with one hand still holding the door-knob and the other levelling the .38 at Donovan.

That was when Donovan electrocuted him. By a single twitch of his finger he set the power coursing along the flex to where he had bared two ends of wire and wrapped them around the inside door handle.

Banks yelled hoarsely and his body stiffened in a tortured arc. His right hand jumped uncontrollably and the .38 flew ceiling high. As it came down Donovan was underneath it. He let the flat black butt settle into his hand and then he switched the power off.

Banks was on his knees facing the door, his left hand welded to the knob. He hung there, quite still, when Donovan cut the power. Treading as warily as a cat Donovan went to him and caught him by the shoulder. The weight of his hand pulled Banks over, still in his crouched huddled position.

Donovan stood looking down at him, whistling regretfully between his teeth, Mr Banks wasn't going to give him the answers he wanted. Mr Banks was never going to answer anybody anything.

Donovan cleaned up all traces of his own presence in the room, and then, carrying the coil of flex in his hand, he left without a backward glance.

A short flight of stairs led him to a long hall which in turn led him to a door opening on to the patio he had seen from the basement window. At the far end of the patio a light glowed through the doorway of what appeared to be a flat above a garage. Donovan crossed the patio silently and found an outside staircase leading upwards. Twice as he climbed the creaking of the stairs halted him for long minutes, but at last he



"It seems to me that I left your tip in my apartment."

reached the landing in front of the door.

He leaned carefully around the door jamb and peered into the room. The man, John, was lying on his side on an untidy bed, his back to the door. Donovan didn't hesitate — he went across the room in a long, smooth leap. His left hand caught the man's arm and his right swung the .38 high. The man's body rolled loosely under Donovan's hand and, at the last minute, he checked the downward swing of the pistol. He wasn't going to get his answers here either. The white bone handle of a knife angling from under the ribs of the limp, still-warm body told him that.

Donovan searched the room carefully. At the end of 15 minutes all he had to show for his care was a small, crocodile-skin-covered address book he had found in John's pocket. Donovan leafed through it quickly. Among all the feminine names and phone numbers that testified to the potency of the dead man's boyish charm one address stood out. "Beekman's Rent-a-Garage", read the script, and then, a number and a street. He stuffed the book in his coat pocket.

As he was leaving the flat Donovan paused in the doorway. The coiled length of flex lay where he had dropped it as he went in. He grinned to himself. Might as well make it a real puzzler for the cops, he thought. He went back and stuffed the flex under the pillow of the bed.

There were two cars in the garage under the flat, the black sedan he'd seen earlier that day and a station wagon. Both were complete with ignition keys. Donovan chose the station wagon and toolled it quietly down the driveway to the deserted street. Inside 20 minutes he was sitting in the car in a dark, gloomy factory street staring at a row of lock-up garages under the sign "Beekman's".

He left the station wagon and walked silently along the row of buildings. Halfway down the row, light shining through cracks marked out a small door set in the big double-doors of the garage. Donovan eased this door open silently and found himself looking at the rear end of a car that was a dead ringer for the one he'd flown to Malaysia. He knew he was right then.

(Continued on page 53)

THE DOZEN DIRTY TRICKS

A rubber tank armada pointed toward Calais, a double for General Montgomery planted in Gibraltar — these were some of the ingenious decoy tricks that faked Hitler's armies 1000 miles out of position while the Allied forces stormed Normandy.

"MEIN HERREN, let me see if I understand you correctly," the small rat-faced man with the stubby moustache sneered in shrill tones as unpleasant as a stick of chalk screeching across a blackboard. "According to what you clever spy-masters tell me, the Amerikanische schwein are simultaneously not planning to attack us at all AND are planning to launch massive amphibious invasions in Holland, the Mediterranean coast of France and Pas-de-Calais area on the Channel. Nicht wahr?"

The four German intelligence chiefs representing the Army's Abwehr, the Luftwaffe's photo reconnaissance division, the Foreign Office espionage section and the super-secret RSHA that bossed both the Gestapo and a vast international network of agents, swallowed hard. Not one of them dared to answer the Fuhrer when he was in a rage like this. They sat in the massive underground "command bunker" and took it silently as he paced up and down, reviling them in a mounting crescendo of epithets and obscenities, his eyes wild and glaring.

"This is not a children's game to be played in some little kindergarten, you imbeciles!" Hitler shouted. "It is big. It must be big—at least half a million men. How can they hide half a million men—maybe a million—with all that heavy equipment? Why can't you so-called intelligence experts tell me where this invasion is coming? Are you dumkopfs or traitors?"

Where shall I move my troops? Where?"

All the screaming was in vain. Not one of the Third Reich's intelligence chiefs knew that the vast US-British-Canadian invasion force would smash ashore on the beaches of Normandy only 58 hours later. The Nazis had been duped, confused and thoroughly fooled by 12 brilliantly conceived and skilfully executed deceptions. This deadly dozen, which saved thousands of Allied lives and played a vital part in the liberation of Western Europe, were dreamed up by the slickest operators of the US Office of Strategic Services, American Army G-2, British Military Intelligence and Churchill's hush-hush Special Operations Executive. Working together under maximum security conditions, they code-named the whole "deception package" Operation Fortitude.

Here are the 12 dirty tricks that saved D-Day, and opened the road to Berlin.

(1) Dublin was known to be one of the main listening posts for Axis spy services, for it offered the twin advantage of being situated in a neutral nation (Eire) and close to both the US forces staging in North Ireland and to the central Allied invasion base—Britain.

One night in early May, 1944, a curly haired young American supply officer carrying the ID card and dog-tags of a major crossed into Eire on leave and began hitting the many fine pubs in the Irish capital. He seemed to be well lubricated at 10 pm when—as if by



chance—he rolled merrily into a saloon whose bartender was known to be a paid "ear" for the German Embassy.

"A double whisky for Jimmy O'Brien who's a long way from Boston and dying of thirst," he called out heartily.

The stool-pigeon noticed his Massachusetts accent immediately, and guessed that the young man was a US officer in civvies.

"If you're an O'Brien from Boston, Yank, the first drink's on me," the cagey bartender replied. "Three of my cousins live in Boston, you know," he lied without hesitation.

Talk and whisky flowed steadily across the mahogany, interrupted only when the bartender paused to serve another patron or went into the back room for clean glasses.



While back there, he telephoned a shapely 29-year-old blonde from Stuttgart whose passport showed that she was a "Danish refugee." Within 15 minutes, this golden-haired sex spy arrived to strike up a casual conversation with the increasingly intoxicated American. She was one of the stars of Himmler's thoroughly trained "bedroom brigade," so she had little difficulty in "permitting" the drunken Yank to "seduce" her.

Shortly after he left her apartment at noon the next day, she reported to her superiors.

"He may have been half-stupid with whisky," she complained, "but he insisted on making love again and again until four o'clock in the morning. I'm exhausted."

"Save that for your memoirs,

liebschen. What did you learn?"

"Something very important. This Yankee idiot is a major in the supply corps, and he promised me a most interesting present," she answered.

"What?" the Gestapo colonel snapped.

"'You're a good kid,' he said," she continued with a proud, knowing smirk, "'so I'll send you a pair of wooden shoes next month!'"

"Wooden shoes? Holland!" her superior exploded. "Naturlich, the long Dutch coast where our defenses are stretched thin! Holland!"

Within 90 minutes, the German embassy's short wave transmitter was crackling out a coded message about the Allied plan to invade the Netherlands. Among those listen-

ing was the US intelligence agent who had played the role of the boozy supply officer so convincingly. The whole purpose of his trip to Ireland was to leave German agents a trail of false clues pointing to an Allied invasion of Holland.

(2) Although the Nazis "bought" the phony New Englander's performance, the brain-trusters behind Operation Fortitude knew that it would take a lot more flim-flam to get the traditionally cautious Prussian field marshals to move any troops into Holland. That was obviously going to require much more bait. To supply this, three additional special operations were launched.

Perhaps the simplest was the establishment of a phony radio-

station that called itself "Ice Skate". Allied intelligence knew that the very competent cryptographers of the German Wehrmacht had recently cracked the code used to pass messages to one major segment of the Dutch Underground, so the Anglo-American deception team decided to take advantage of this fully.

"Ice Skate" began transmitting in this code literally scores of messages to non-existent Allied agents and spy rings, all designed to reinforce the idea that the Netherlands would be the site of the invasion.

"Ice Skate to Uncle Peter. Imperative you forward immediately detailed photos of beach defences in Zone Nine."

Other imaginative instructions poured out to fictitious Resistance groups such as "Bath Towel", "Big Fisherman", "Cheese Store" and "Blackjack". The messages soon began to produce a growing uneasiness in the German High Command in Holland, which vigorously resisted suggestions from Berlin that the Wehrmacht force in the Netherlands be reduced by two divisions destined for France. Those troops were still in Holland on D-Day.

(3) Operation Stampede was probably the most complex of the assorted tricks pulled to fool the Nazis into expecting an invasion of the Dutch coast. It began when an OSS agent in London spotted a pretty long-legged blonde in the British capital. He recognised her as a Nazi operative who had spied in North Africa, so he promptly triggered a complete investigation and round-the-clock surveillance. She was Hannie Herodson, a phoney "Dutch" girl sent from Ber-



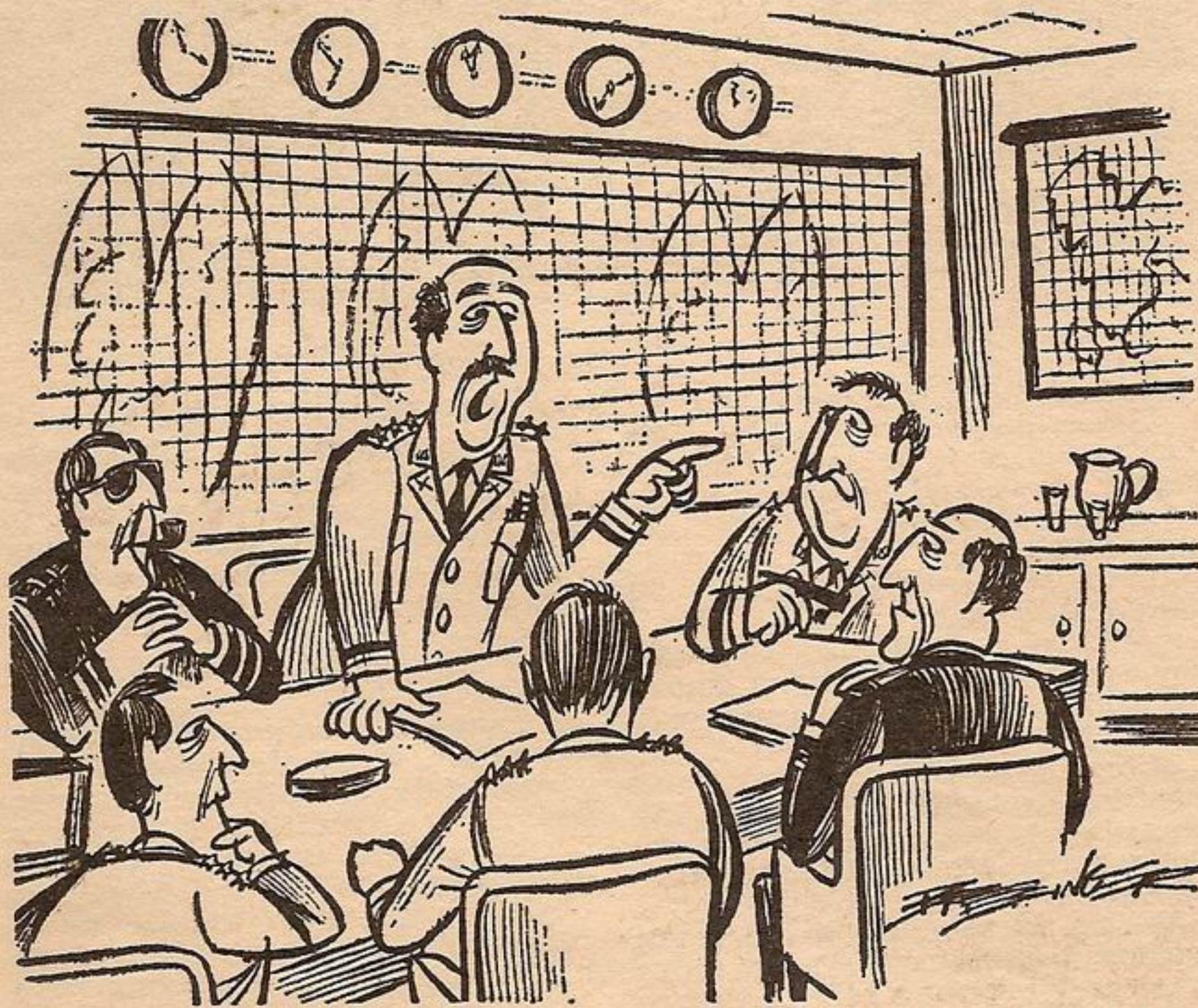
"Talk to me about marriage a month from now, Carmen, right now I'm overstocked."

lin in March, 1944, on a specific assignment to secure the time and place of D-Day. To fool this tough professional agent, OSS and the British MI-5 created an entire dummy corporation.

The Arista Film Co was estab-

lished on Wardour Street in Soho, site of many small English motion picture companies. But Arista was not making pictures. It was a fake—more precisely, in the language of the gridiron—a fake fake. All the personnel were Dutch, British and American, and they spent their time preparing propaganda and psychological warfare material to be used when the Allies bulldozed ashore on the Netherlands beaches. One of the employees hired for this hush-hush operation just happened to be the ultra-sexy Hannie Herodson who was ever so delicately manoeuvred into position where a gullible American captain would give her a job at the Arista Film Co. This man, who had no idea that the entire project was a sham and never suspected that the shapely blonde was a Nazi, was not informed that he was helping Operation Fortitude.

As the OSS expected, the captain was soon very intimately associated with the worldly German girl who was quite adroit at using her body to secure information. She got a key to the safe from his pocket while he slept, made a wax impression and later secured a duplicate. With this, she was able to burgle the strong-box and steal a complete set of artfully dishonest plans for a dream-dust invasion of Holland. These papers had been meticulously prepared at General Dwight D. Eisenhower's SHAEF headquarters—just for her. She radioed her important findings—including specific beach locations



"They surpass us in weapons of great technological skill and massive destruction. Not the Russians, the toy manufacturers!"

—to Germany, and then fled in a submarine just before D-Day.

This talented tart was in Berlin a week after the juggernaut breached the vaunted West Wall defences on the Normandy shore. In reliance on her, the Wehrmacht had shifted the 347th Division to defend the north coast between Alkmaar and Helder and the 165th had been sent to the beaches near the Hague. They stayed there for weeks, because the Nazi generals still thought that the Normandy assault was merely a preliminary diversion to be followed by the main landings in Holland.

(4) The fourth main stunt that helped delude the Germans into reinforcing their military power in Holland was not planned. It was a freak bonus, a piece of luck on which the OSS was quick enough and shrewd enough to capitalise. It started out as a disaster, and ended triumphantly.

It involved a strange half-caste agent named "Billy", son of a Dutch father and Indonesian mother. When Billy was parachuted into Holland by OSS, he was captured by the Nazi counter-espionage organisation within three weeks. He was taken with his transmitter by the same team of German spy-catchers that had been so successful in seizing agents of British Special Operations Executive. Since the Germans had been able to force the SOE men to radio for weapons, money and more agents (to be seized), the counter-espionage group saw no reason why they couldn't pull the same trick on the American cloak-and-dagger outfit. Billy had to co-operate, or face the blowtorch, the lash, and the dental drill.

Billy didn't want to be scorched and dissected into a crippled lunatic, but he didn't intend to lure his friends into the trap either. He agreed to send radio messages to the Allies for the Germans, who had his code book, too.

"No funny business, Billy," a German lieutenant told him, "or we will kill you."

Billy began to tap out his message.

"Everything okay. Local Resistance needs at least 200 kilos of plastic explosive, 70 Brens or Thompsons plus ammunition. Will require another 100,000 guilders for expenses," he radioed with a pistol two inches from his temple.

"Will ship immediately. Drop-zone 'Tulip' Saturday night. How is flying weather?" OSS in London answered.

"Damn lousy now but clearing fast," Billy replied.

The word "damn" was the pre-arranged danger signal that told OSS that Billy was a prisoner. In the next seven weeks, some small quantities of arms and money were parachuted down as if the US authorities didn't know their agent was in enemy hands. Then OSS began using Billy for Operation Fortitude. All sorts of questions about Dutch beaches, highways, mine fields and coastal de-

fences were flashed to him. "Large numbers of friends will join you shortly," one signal from London concluded cryptically.

Because of these phony messages, the 719th Wehrmacht Division was rushed to Harlem and the 19th Panzer Division raced north—away from France. By some miracle, Billy was not shot and later escaped to be congratulated for playing his tricky, dangerous role in the important deception program.

(5) The Germans had a powerful force — including several of their finest armored divisions — stationed in southern France to repel any thrust from Italy against the Mediterranean coast of France. It was a prime target of Operation Fortitude to keep those massive tank groups — such as the fanatical Hermann Goering Division — as far from the Normandy battle-zone for as long as possible.

"The notion of trying to con an old pro like Rommel into believing as far-fetched an idea as a landing in southern France is ludicrous," one US colonel argued. "After all, despite our immense air superiority, some of those Luftwaffe recon planes will get through to photograph all the hardware we're piling up in England. Thousands of

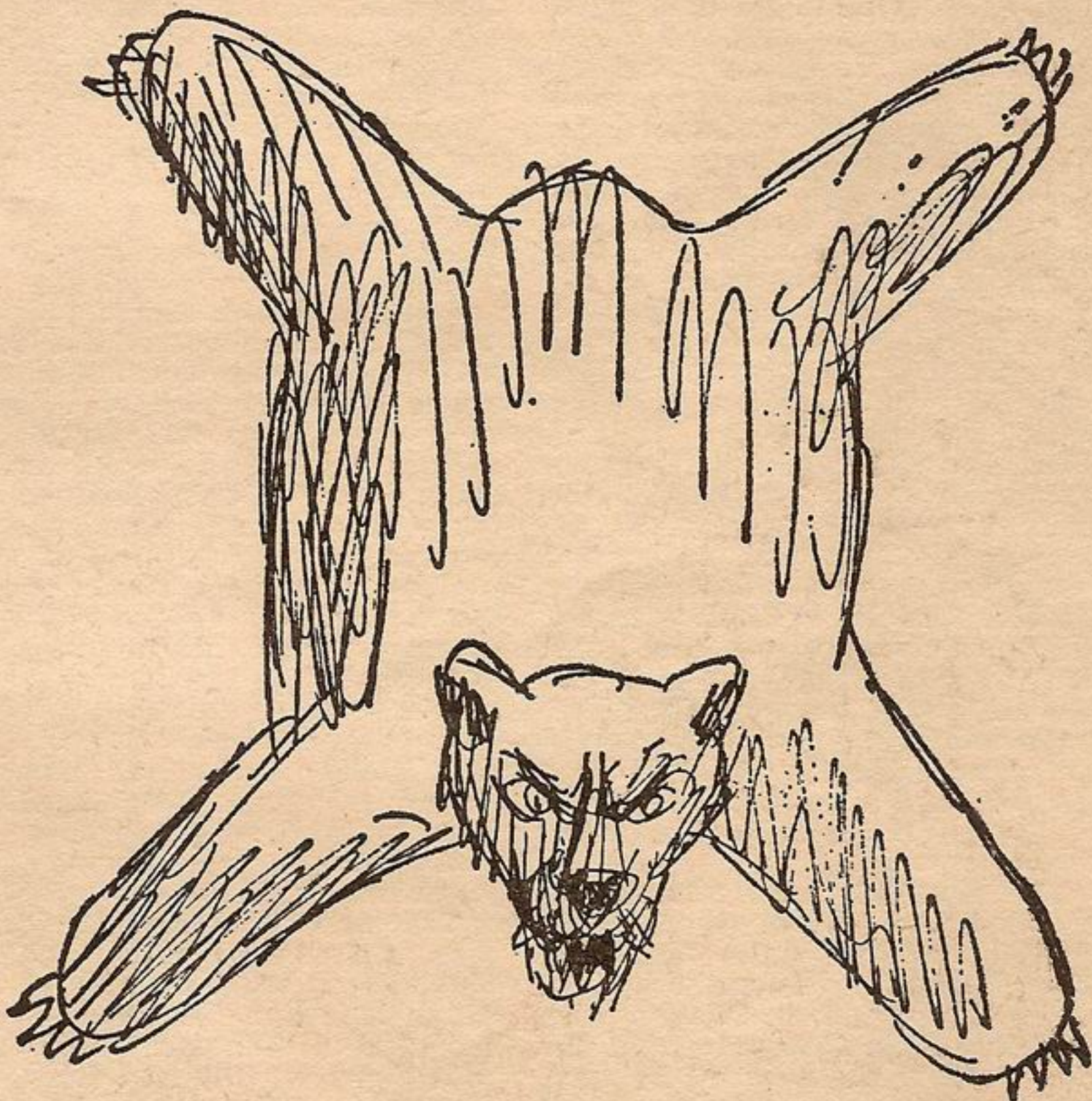
tanks, whole fleets of landing craft, fantastic numbers of guns and trucks and radio vans. We can't hide all that."

"Equipment is never as impressive as a man, especially to that maniac Hitler who sees the entire war in personal terms," a British brigadier countered. "Let's give them an individual whom Hitler hates and fears—Monty!"

Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery's "Desert Rats" had already hurt Rommel painfully in North Africa, and Rommel was in command of the defense of France. He would take Monty seriously, as would Hitler. About 10 days before the Normandy landings, Montgomery was driven to Northolt Airport near London under heavy guard to board a transport plane that took off with fighter escort. The small armada touched down a few hours later on the airfield at Gibraltar, where top British brass met Montgomery.

All this urgent activity was seen and heard by numerous German agents in nearby Spain, who had recognised Montgomery through their excellent Zeiss binoculars when he arrived. Something big was going on.

(Continued on page 55)



"I correct the wind gauge, adjust the elevation, explain about the crosshairs on the telescope sight and she gets him on one shot with her eyes closed."

A WATCH-DOG FOR VENUS

Quayne had forced himself into the position of body-guard. To guard a woman with the most beautiful body he had ever seen . . .

QUAYNE cut the motor of the tiny launch and drifted in toward the bank of the creek. He got out and moored the boat and headed across the island, keeping close to cover.

When he came to the next creek he stopped and burrowed down out of sight. He slowly lifted his head and peered cautiously toward the big launch anchored upstream. The white paint blazed in the Brazilian sunlight, the expensive brass fittings glittering like gold. The girl and the man with her had plunged into the water on the far side of the launch. He could see the other two big figures sprawled out on board, massive and sluggish, like basking sea lions.

He slipped into the bottle-green water, giving a last pat to the snub-nosed Chief Special .38 fitting snugly into the waterproof holster attached to the belt above his brief trunks. As he swam for the launch underwater he blessed the years of skindiving that had given him the lungs to do it.

He came up out of the emerald water and dragged himself over the side of the launch, the water sliding off his lean brown-skinned flesh.

The first big man turned and gaped at the bore of the .38 staring him coldly in the face. The other one started to make a fight of it. He lunged at Quayne with a vicious kick. Quayne caught the foot, yanked the man off balance, and smacked him over the skull with the checked walnut stock of the .38. The man sprawled.

Quayne gestured at the other one to tie him up. Teeth glittering behind a thick-lipped snarl, the other big man took up the coil of rope and bound his companion. Quayne gestured him aside, went over the knots and tightened them.

Quayne signalled to the other man to kneel down while he, too, was bound. The man glowered

and went down slowly. Then suddenly he spun, a knife somehow in his hand. Quayne banged the full weight of the .38 against the bicep of the big man's knife arm and, as the muscles stiffened, slammed on the arm lock. The big man went down, yelping. Quayne drove his heel deep into the big man's stomach and as he writhed, fighting for breath, rolled him over and tied him up.

Then he sat down, breathing hard, and waited for the girl and the man to come back out of the water.

After a while the hands appeared over the side of the launch and they rose up, the fish on their hooks glittering like huge jewels, guns clutched in their hands, the cylinders on their backs making them look like weird humped fish. They dragged off the masks and stared.

Quayne hardly noticed the man. He had gaped at the girl's cinnamon-skinned beauty in newspapers and magazines but this was the first time he had seen her in the sleek, superb flesh. She stood staring at him, the water trickling down her body like quicksilver on bronze. She looked like a golden bride of the Sapa Inca.

The man standing alongside her was young, shortish, narrow-shouldered, with a mass of seal-black hair and the hawkish good looks of a flamenco dancer.

The girl, all fire and spirit, spat something at Quayne in Portuguese. Quayne smiled, "I'm afraid you will have to repeat it in English, senhora — uncomplimentary as I fear it may have been."

The girl, eyes blazing, said in delightfully accented but almost perfect English, "You — you scum . . . my father will have you flayed alive for this—"

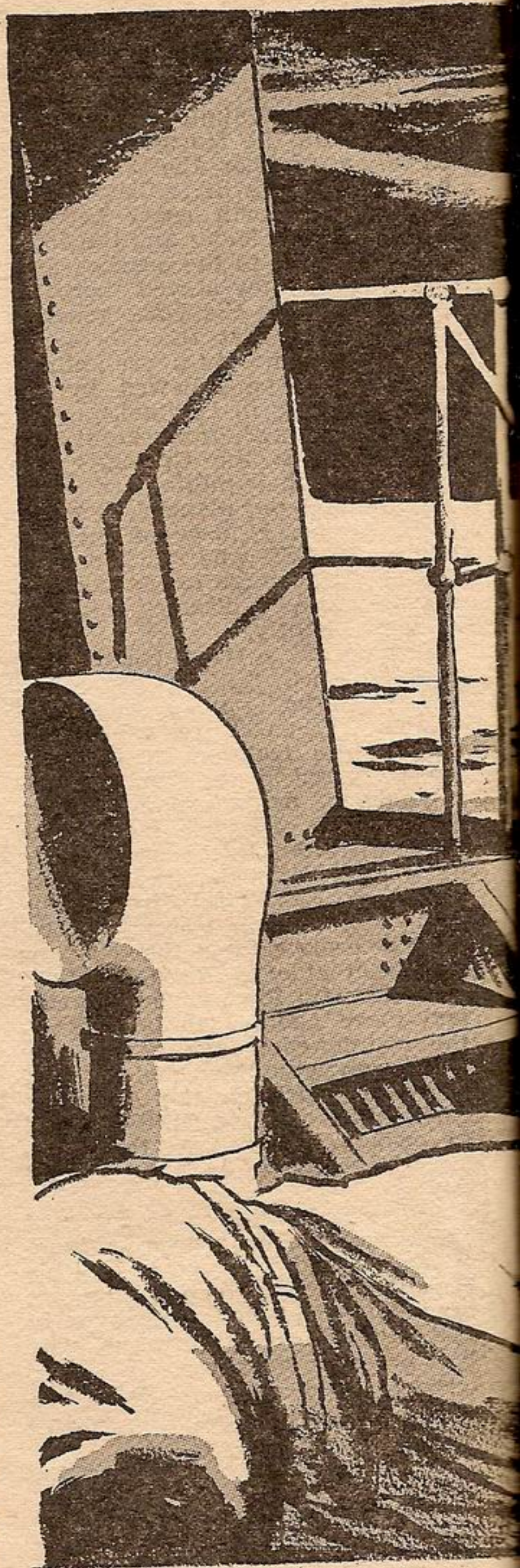
Quayne smiled again. "I'm afraid not, senhora. You see, I do not intend—"

Suddenly her gun came up and

she pressed the trigger. The harpoon, hurled by springs of Herculean strength, flashed at Quayne's head. But he had seen her movement and ducked, the harpoon whipping past him, a hairsbreadth away. The girl leapt in at him, a spitting, clawing fury. Quayne slashed her above the knee with the karate cut. She tumbled over, the gun falling from her hand.

Quayne said carefully, "Now, we'll go down below and get in touch with Dom Carlos."

The girl, glaring at him balefully, got to her feet, rubbing her leg. Quayne gestured with the .38 and they went ahead of him, down below. He said shortly, "Where's





the radio?" He meant business.

The girl glared silently. The young man nodded sheepishly toward the door.

Standing in front of the set Quayne said briefly, "Now, senhora, please get in touch with your father."

The girl stared unbelievably back at him. "You want me to—"

Quayne nodded. "Right away."

She stared at him a little longer and then she turned toward the set and flicked the knobs. A deep voice spoke suddenly, a questioning note in it. The girl jabbered quickly into the set, eyes darting venomously at Quayne.

Quayne moved across to the set. He said, raising his voice

above the girl's, "Dom Carlos, I would like to speak to you — in English."

The girl stopped speaking. There was silence and then the deep voice said in heavily-accented English, "Who are you? What do you want?"

Quayne said deliberately, "I have your daughter and her boy friend here captive. We are anchored up a creek on—" He named the island. "I would like you to get here as soon as you possibly can. Come with as many men as you like, but I will permit only you to board this vessel." He flipped off the control. He said conversationally to the other two, "Now we wait."

They stared at him, uncomprehending, a look of bewilderment beginning to vie with the glittering rancor in the eyes of the girl. Quayne said coolly, "Let's go back up top." They went ahead of him back up the steps...

The other launch came slowly up the creek and hove to alongside. A group of men bunched together, staring across at Quayne and the others. Quayne called, "Just you, Dom Carlos."

A huge, bulky man separated himself from the others and stepped forward. He sprang from one launch to the other with surprising agility. As he straightened up Quayne held the .38 on him. He said, speaking slowly and care-

fully, "First observe your daughter's bodyguards, Dom Carlos. I did that to them."

The bound men glared back at him, shame and anger twisting their fleshy faces. Quayne said lightly, "You see, Dom Carlos, size is not everything in guarding such a valuable commodity as your daughter." He nodded toward the girl, her fiery eyes glittering defiance at him. "Your daughter has spirit and courage."

Dom Carlos nodded, a flash of pride in his watchful eyes. "Her mother was a direct descendant of the Incas. She, too, had spirit." He stared unblinkingly at the young man. "What of you, Rafael?" The young man dropped his eyes uncomfortably.

Quayne said quietly, "A man is not wise to argue with the bore of a .38 staring him in the face." He continued patiently, "But you can see the situation here, senhor. I could have done anything. Tipped the two bodyguards overboard, shot the young man. Or just dumped the three of them on the island. And then I could have sailed away with your daughter. I wonder how much of your cattle empire it would have cost you to have ransomed her?"

Dom Carlos stared at him steadily. "And why did you not do any of this, senhor?"

Quayne said coolly, "A couple of attempts have been made to kidnap your daughter, happily both pretty amateurish. However, it is well known that you have not been happy about the type of bodyguard you have been able to secure for her. It is also well known that you would pay a lot of money for the services of a bodyguard in whose care she would be perfectly safe."

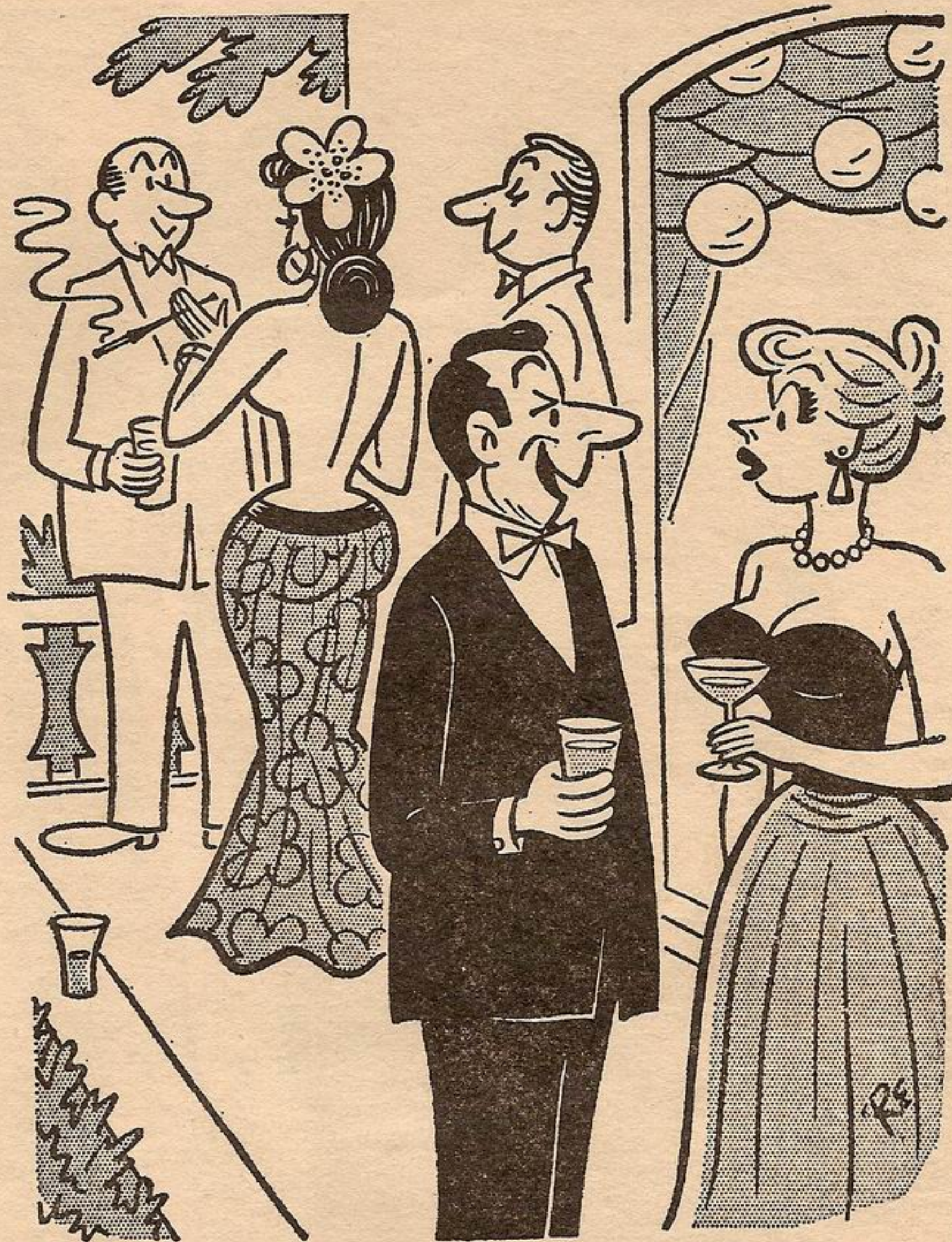
He took a long breath. "I had a private detective agency in Sydney, senhor. I sold it up and took a plane here to your country. I checked for weeks on yourself and your daughter. I even found out that you had specialised radio equipment that could put you in touch with her every minute of the day no matter where you both might be. I watched everything your daughter and her bodyguards did, and then I followed them here today." He stared levelly at the big man. "Now, do I get the job?"

The big man stared silently back at him and then suddenly he began to laugh, the echoes rolling up from his great belly, a bright thunder of sound. He roared, "You get the job, senhor. You get the job at double the price I intended to pay."

The girl stared at Quayne, her skin slowly reddening beneath the bronze. She hissed, "Why, you — you buccaneer — you mercenary — you — you highwayman—"

Quayne smiled back at her. "I can show you a few points on underwater hunting, too. Now, about the way you hold your gun—"

The girl turned her back and padded on swift, angry feet down



"Except for a few quaint customs she clings to, it's hard to believe he met her on a Pacific atoll!"

the stairs that led below. Dom Carlos, watching her, let forth another thunderclap of laughter. Even the young man permitted himself a weak smile. Quayne grinned at them but he was already wishing ruefully that he had handled that gorgeous wildcat with a little more diplomacy . . .

Quayne shot through the water, eyes on the shoal of bonito, bringing the gun up. The steel-blue greyhounds flashed past, their fins tucked into grooves, lowering water resistance to the utmost, slipping by the three hunters at the enormous underwater speed of 30 miles an hour. Quayne, wily in the ways of the lightning fish, drew up the gun and fired a foot in front of his target's head. The bonito, transfixed, writhed downwards, tugging the nylon line after him. Quayne drifted after him, leisurely holding gun and line.

Out of the corner of his eye he saw the girl, eyes alight behind her mask, shoot and miss badly, misjudging the speed of the fish. The young man Rafael also fired and hit his fish, but the huge-muscled bonito tore itself off the

hook and floated downwards, meat for crabs.

Quayne, smiling, headed for the surface. Bobbing up out of the water he handed his kill to the boatman. The boatman, grunting, lifted it into the launch.

Quayne went down again. The shoal of bonito, hunting for food, had wheeled and was coming back. Quayne, harpoon freshly fitted, again took aim. Once more another sleek, blue-scaled greyhound writhed away, pierced from side to side.

Quayne hauled himself out of the water and went aboard the launch. He rid himself of the cylinders, mask and flippers and sprawled out at full length, waiting for the others to come up.

After a while Rafael came over the side and eased himself out of the harness. He grimaced at Quayne, mumbling in his tortuous English, "Those fish . . . pam-pouf! and they are gone—"

At last the girl came up. She clambered aboard and silently wrenched off her equipment. Quayne, watching her amusedly, sucked in a breath as he ran his

eyes over the sleek perfection of her body.

She looked up and caught Quayne's smile. She exploded, "Oh, you are so very smart, senhor! At just about everything, it seems. Surely there can be no crime in Sydney at all when you are there practicing your profession!"

Quayne grinned. "Perhaps I might not be the greatest private detective in the world, but at least I have a profession to practice. You practice none, I believe . . ."

The girl glared at him icily. Quayne, turning his head to Rafael, said lightly, "And you, senhor, what is your profession?"

Rafael flushed a little. The girl said fiercely, "His was a braver profession than yours, Senhor Quayne. He was a matador."

Quayne raised an eyebrow. "Was?"

The girl said coldly, "Rafael almost lost his life. He was gored in Mexico City. That's where I met him."

Quayne's eyes travelled immediately to the great scar that he had wondered about. He said, "Some cornada, mano."

Rafael's eyes flicked at him. "You have watched the corrida?"

Quayne nodded. "Oh, yes. I took a holiday in Spain once. You were a fenomino?"

The girl snapped, "Every manager swears his fighter is a fenomino, a phenomenon. Rafael



"Hey, do you want to taste something out of this world?"

was more than that. He was a torero valiente."

Rafael murmured, "Thank you, nena."

Quayne said softly, "And you became infatuated with the glamor of a silken cape and thought you were in love with him. And then when misfortune came to him you

thought you owed him something. So you brought him down here on an extended holiday, intending later to marry him. Why haven't you?"

The girl stared angrily at him. "Senhor, that is none of your concern. I will marry Rafael when it pleases me."

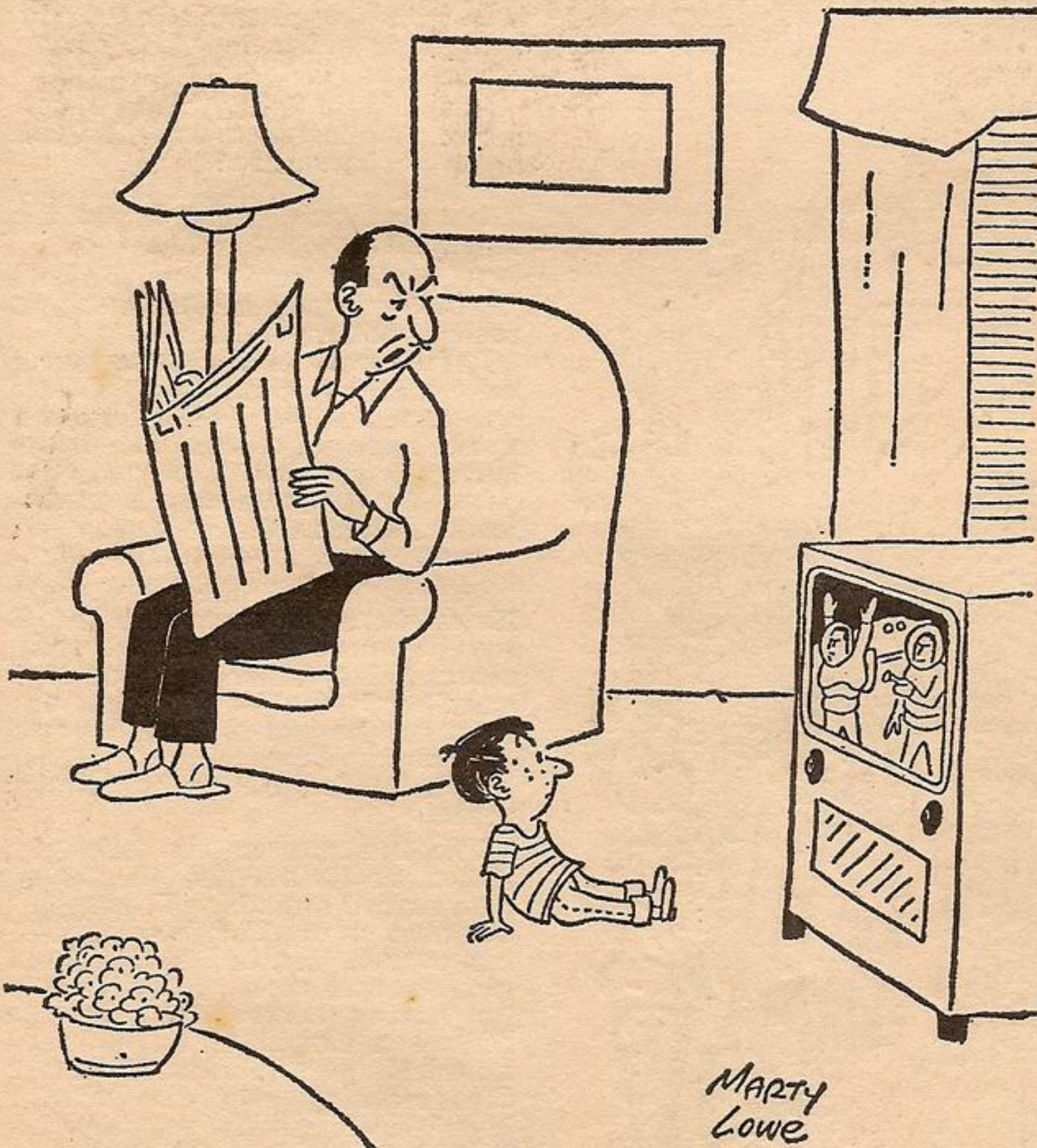
Quayne shook his head. "No, senhora, you will not. For you do not love him. You only pity him. There is a vast difference." He swung his head on the young man. He said carefully, "And you, senhor, the world in which you were a god is gone but you decided to settle for being the paramour of a goddess. You could have money that way and some degree of power and a faint sort of reflected glory . . . the faint glory of being the husband of one of the most beautiful women in the world and the son-in-law of a titan. At least you thought you could have it."

He levelled his unblinking grey-eyed stare at the young man. "But now you know it is a false dream, don't you, senhor? You know, don't you, that she does not love you and that there will be no wedding with the herdsmen slaughtering cattle for a feast and the Indians performing love dances. You know that, don't you, Rafael?"

The young man stared silently back at him. He said slowly, "Yes, I know that, senhor."

The girl protested angrily, "Rafael, why do you allow this — this imitation detective to tell you that—"

Rafael turned his head toward her. He said emptily, "You know it is true, nena. You know I have been hanging on hopelessly. You are as kind as you are beautiful. You have been keeping me because the one thing I could do with expertness and skill I can no longer do." He looked at Quayne, despair in his eyes. "It is a bad thing to lose courage,



MARTY LOWE

"Start blasting back to earth. In less than two light years it'll be bedtime."

senhor. And it is a worse thing to know only the trade of a hero. When that is gone there is no place in the world for you. No place at all."

Quayne's eyes flickered in sudden sympathy. He said quietly, "I can understand. I can understand that—"

The girl flared, "You understand? What could you understand — you who use words like a club that hurts and bruises . . . you who shatter the last few dreams a man has left . . . you — you professional Peeping Tom . . ."

She flung about and padded angrily down the steps that led below. Quayne said in a stilted voice, "I am sorry, senhor. I am sorry."

Rafael said emptily, "You were right. It is true. That is all."

Quayne was thinking, why do I have to keep on antagonising her, stabbing at her like a wasp, this girl that I would give all that Dom Carlos is paying me to take in my arms just once like this broken-down matador has done . . . this girl who has hit me harder than a harpoon from her underwater gun . . .

He grabbed up his equipment with an unwanted rough anger and prepared to go below again and take it out on the fish . . .

Quayne and the girl had come up out of the water and were making their streaming way across the deck when Quayne felt the wet hair prickling on his neck the way it always did when he knew something was going very wrong.

Quayne swung around, but



"Then one night when our TV set wasn't working, I took a good look at her."

Rafael, cool and steady, was holding the automatic on them, for once purposeful in his every move. Quayne cocked an eye at the pistol. He knew guns, and this looked exactly like a US .45 Model 1911A1 pistol. But he knew it wasn't. He said suddenly, "A Mexican Obregon, senhor? Calibre

.45 A.C.P. 11.43 mm?"

Rafael nodded. "I bought it in Mexico City after the goring. I had a funny idea I might shoot myself. Even after I came down here with Francesca I still thought I might do it. But not now. I have other plans for its use."

Quayne said lightly, "Like shooting me, for instance, and throwing me to the barracuda?"

Rafael said expressionlessly, "That perhaps. But not if you are sensible."

The girl found her voice. "Rafael, are you mad? Don't you realise that my father—"

Rafael said in the same stony voice, "I realise that your father has untold millions of cruzeiros. I want some of them. I can no longer command thousands of pesos for an afternoon's performance. This is the only way left to me."

Quayne cursed himself silently. He might have known, he should have guessed that barred from access to her father's gold through marriage Rafael would choose this way. But he just had not thought the broken-down little matador had it in him. He cursed himself again.

The boatman, squat and ugly, stared at Rafael and the young man rapped something at him. The boatman swung the wheel, changing course. Looking at the boatman, Quayne cursed himself again for having taken this new man at face value and not having questioned Rafael's murmured remark that morning about not having been able to get the regular man. Rafael attended to all these jobs for the girl like a poor relation in some small way making up for his keep.



Quayne said softly, "Just as a matter of interest, where are we headed?"

Rafael said expressionlessly, "For a rendezvous. There are some other men in a larger vessel. I had to take partners in this. I warn you, they are dangerous men."

Quayne said, "You want to watch they are not too dangerous for you. There are a lot of sharks in these waters."

Rafael said tonelessly, "I will handle them. I may have lost my courage but I have found a good substitute. I will carry this through and get the money if it means killing you both."

Quayne said slowly, "I believe you would. The killing part, I mean." He looked at the girl. "Your torero valiente has recovered his cojones. A coarse phrase, but apt."

The girl said, staring at him, "Rafael, don't you understand you can't get away with—"

Rafael said tersely, "We go below." He gestured with the Obregon. Quayne and the girl moved slowly over toward the stairs. Halfway down Quayne swung the punch. The butt of the Obregon smashed against the back of his hand, bringing paralyzing pain. Quayne, sucking his aching fingers, said, "You have changed."

Rafael said tonelessly, "Try that again, senhor, and you will be meat for the barracuda."

Down below he gestured at them to take a chair each by the radio. He said, "We will wait in case Dom Carlos makes a call. If he does you will answer him, Francesca, in a normal manner. Tell him you will be a little late in returning. We want a good start."

They sat there and waited, Quayne's mind ticking over, suggesting a dozen methods of attack and rejecting them all. The sound came over the radio, the special call Dom Carlos gave for the girl.

Rafael leaned forward. "Answer it, Francesca. No tricks."

The girl flipped a switch and said in a clear, steady voice, "This is your favorite daughter, father. In fact, your only child."

There was silence for a moment and then the deep, strong voice of Dom Carlos said, "Why do you remind me of that, little one?" His voice raised itself the veriest fraction. "My pet, there is nothing wrong, is there?"

The Obregon jerked in Rafael's hand, aimed, curiously enough, at Quayne and not at the girl. Quayne looked quickly at the girl and caught the sudden flash of concern in her eyes for him.

The girl's voice said evenly, "What could there be wrong? We have had fine hunting and we will be a little late returning, that's all."

Dom Carlos' great belly-dance of a laugh echoed through the room. "Why should I worry when you are being guarded by that tiger I hired?" His voice dropped a little. "Tell me, little one, how do you like that fellow? More

than you admit, I suspect. He is a fine tough one, that Peeping Tom, as you call him. Much better than that funny little bullfighter you brought back with you."

The girl said clearly, "Father, Rafael intends to hold me to ransom. He is here now holding a gun on me and Senhor Quayne. There are some others—"

The barrel of the Obregon smashed against her mouth, smearing it with blood. Rafael lunged forward and shattered the radio with a kick. The bore of the Obregon swung menacingly on the advancing Quayne. Eyes blazing, the young man said thickly, "That was very foolish, Francesca. My friends will not like it. They will not like it all."

Quayne, looking at the girl's bloodied mouth, snarled, "Neither will Dom Carlos like it. He will stake you to an ant-hill."

Rafael spat, "First he has to catch me, senhor. And if it seems as if he will then he will find you and her looking like a torero I once saw after a bull caught him on the horns and then trampled him with the hoofs." He stared his sudden unmasked hatred at

them both. "I have seen what has been silently growing between you two. Dom Carlos could see it, too."

He sneered at Quayne. "But you won't be able to carry the situation much further, detective. After this, Dom Carlos will have no further use for you. And then again my friends are not generous men. But before any of them touch you—" He hefted the barrel of the gun menacingly in his hand, eyes gleaming ferociously.

Quayne said conversationally, "My, my, you've really got those cojones right back, haven't you?"

Rafael gestured, sinewy hand clasped around the butt of the Obregon with nervous, dangerous energy. He said coldly, "Don't tempt me, detective. Now, get back up top, both of you."

They went up ahead of him, Quayne's mind still trying to figure a way but coming up blank each time. Rafael held the cards and he was playing them like an old hand at the game.

It had been dark for a couple of hours when they contacted the other boat.

(Continued on page 58)



"You have a lovely apartment, Mr Ingram."

THE DIE-HARD BREED

Pop Pindow was nearly blind and plenty shaky of hand, but to three small boys he was the frontier's greatest lawman. Then the killers hit the town!

MAYBE Pop Pindow was an old die-hard with a few missing molars, blurring eyesight and a shaky hand, but there wasn't anything wrong with his appetite. He slicked up the last morsel of ham and eggs with half a biscuit, popped it into his whisker-rimmed mouth and shoved back from the breakfast table.

"Marge," he said, "yuh-re a better cook than your mother or grandmother ever was!"

Marge, his granddaughter, smiled fondly at him. She was a pretty girl with sunny blue eyes and a crown of dark-brown hair. She stood, trim and neat in her gingham dress, and began to clear off the table.

"Thanks, Pop," she said. Then getting back to the subject she'd been harping on for the past month, "I'm still in favor of us moving back to the ranch."

Pop scowled fiercely and shoved to his feet. Twinges of pain shot through him here and there. He swore under his breath. Rheumatism. But who could be bothered with rheumatism when his only granddaughter was battling to get him to turn in his deputy's badge.

He pointed a gnarled finger at her and yelled, "You think sidewinders like the Welch brothers can bluff me? You think I'm a has-been? You—"

"Now, Pop," Marge said gently, "take it easy. Of course, the Welch brothers can't bluff you. I just think you've served your time as a layman and that you're entitled to a long holiday. After all, a man who's worn a badge for 50—"

"Rubbish!" Pop snorted, and stamped out of the kitchen into the front room.

Marge wasn't fooling him with that soft soap. He realised she knew he was too old to wear a lawman's badge. He knew it, too, but if anyone thought he was going to give up his job in North Butte, they were loco. To Pop's way of thinking, retiring was just another way of tossing in the sponge, and he couldn't do that. He had some mighty ardent admirers here in North Butte and he couldn't let them down. Anyway, he doubted that the Welch brothers

would bother with the North Butte bank, for the bank in this little out-of-the-way cowtown was just chicken feed to sidewinders like the Welches.

In the front room, the old lawman strapped the worn single action .44 about his skinny waist and slapped his hat over his white hair. He took a squint at himself in the mirror, gave his deputy's badge a shine with his sleeve, lifted his thin shoulders a notch and stamped out into the bright morning sunlight.

He felt fine. A little creaky in the joints, a little short of breath, but he was still plenty salty. He swaggered a little as he strode along the dusty street toward his office. He met old lady McKay, the mayor's wife, and doffed his big hat.

"Good morning, Sheriff," she said respectfully.

He stuck out his chest a trifle. As has-been? Most of the folks in North Butte didn't think so. They still thought of him as the great Tom Pindow, who in his younger days could out-shoot, out-cuss and out-fight any man in Cotter County. And Cotter County was a mighty big hunk of territory to cover, with more than its share of rough-and-ready gents.

His office was a two-by-four cubby hole, with a window in front and another in the rear and a sagging swivel chair and a battered desk between. Pop didn't go much for being cooped up in an office. He tugged the chair out to the boardwalk and sat down where he could watch the going's on of the town, even if he couldn't see worth shucks without his glasses.

Things were as quiet as usual. Pop fired up his pipe and leaned back against the building. Contentment filled him, even if he didn't know his appointment as deputy sheriff of North Butte was little more than away of giving him a pension for past services. That had rankled at first, being stuck off here in a town which had no more need for a lawman than a pig needs an undershirt, but now he didn't mind so much. He'd found a flock of admirers

here, and to Pop, admiration in big or little doses sure made life worthwhile.

Lifting his eyes, he saw three of his fans hurrying toward him. Skinny, Stub and Bob. Pop wasn't sure of the kids' last names. But these wide-eyed buttons didn't care a hoot about their last names.

"Howdy, men," Pop said. He always addressed them as men, and the 10-year-olds loved it.

"Howdy, Sheriff," the buttons chorused.

They swaggered just like Pop swaggered when he walked from his house to the office. They wore on their shirts tin stars cut from old tobacco cans. They sat down on the boardwalk and looked Pop over from top to toe, open admiration shining in their young eyes.

Skinny, the tall one, had red hair. He spat at a knothole in a board and missed it. "Sheriff, you reckon the Welch brothers will hold up the bank today?"

Pop took a crack at the knothole and hit it dead-centre.

"Yuh never know," he said, squinting thoughtfully toward the blur that was the bank building. "Mebbe so; mebbe not."

Stub, the runt, glanced at the knothole speculatively, then turned his adoring gaze back to Pop. "I feel sorry for 'em if they do try to hold up the bank," he said.

"Sheriff," young Bob said, "show us again just how you draw your gun an' aim at a sidewinder. Show us just once more."

Ignoring the twinge of pain in his stiff back, Pop straightened up and scowled fiercely.

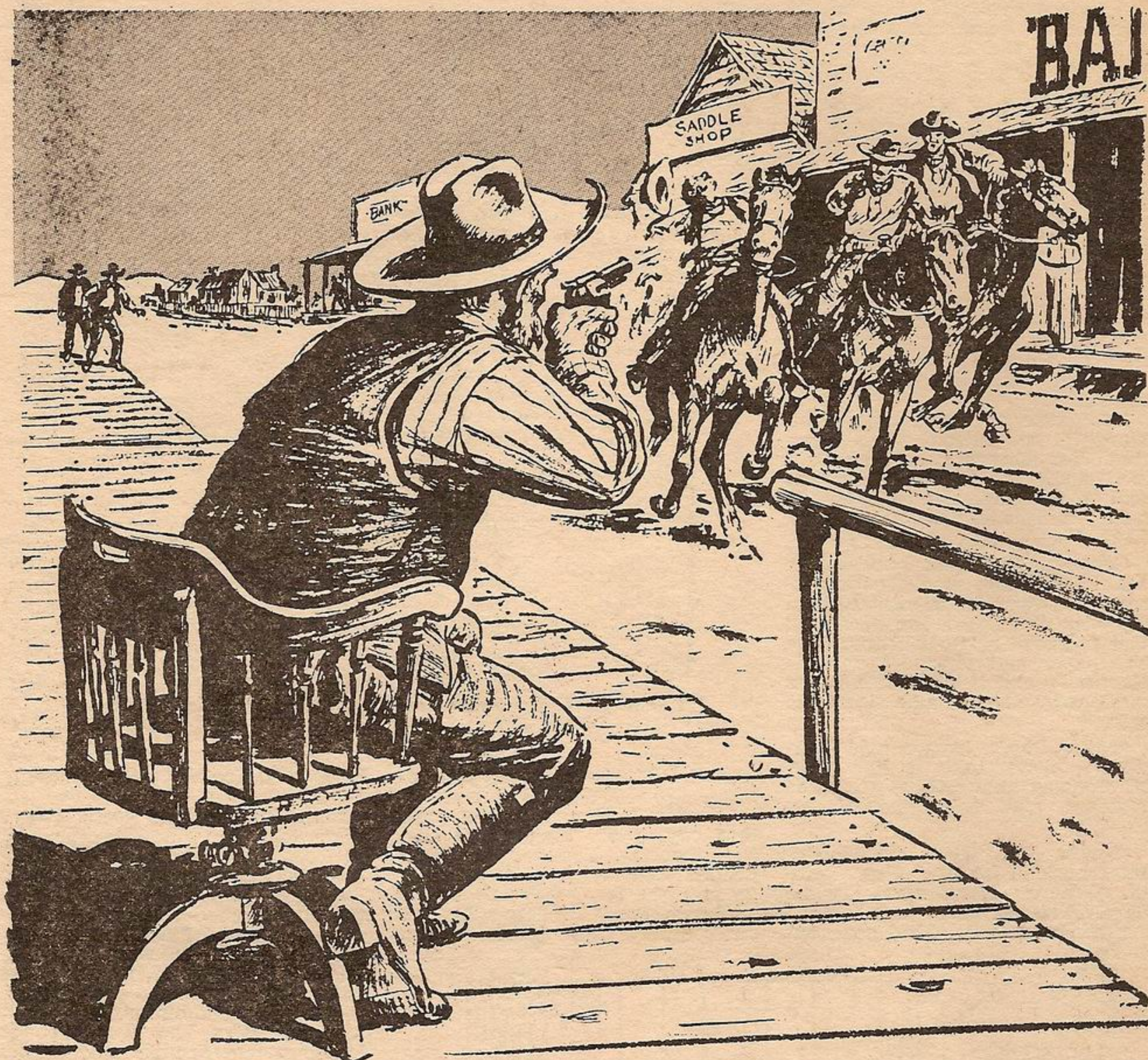
"Well, sir," he said, "watch close, an' I'll show yuh."

He made a grab for his .44, dragged it from the blackened holster and lifted it level with his eyes. He held on to it with both hands. He could hold it steadier that way. No sense in letting the kids see how his hands shook.

"Don't you shut one eye when you aim?" Bob asked.

"No, siree!" Pop said. "I look straight along the barrel with both eyes. Two eyes are better'n one, I allus say."

He shoved the old hogleg back



into the holster and took another crack at the knothole. Almost missed. He'd have to do some practising up on this spitting business.

"Sheriff," Stub said, "tell us about the time you captured them train robbers."

"Aw," Pop said, "that weren't nothing compared to the time I trailed some Injuns across the desert an' rescued some white men they'd captured."

He'd just got goodly started on the tale when Marge came swinging along from the grocery store. She gave the kids a big smile and a handful of cookies and said, "Why don't you star-toters run along and look for outlaws of your own?"

After the kids had scampered away, she turned her blue eyes on Pop. They were as sunny as ever, but a frown creased her brow.

"Pop," she said, "shame on you for filling those boys' heads full of fighting and killing. Telling them wild stories about—"

"Now, looky," Pop sputtered,

"them stories are true. Leastwise, most of 'em are. Besides—"

"Look who's coming to town!" Marge cried.

Pop swivelled. At first he couldn't tell who the long-legged rider on the dun horse was. But when the rider hit the dust and hurried toward them, hat in hand, Pop recognised him. He was Freddie Star from Junction.

"Hello, Marge," Freddie said, grinning a foot wide. "Hi, Pop. How's tricks?"

"Fine, fine!" Pop said, grinning back at the lanky, young, six-footer.

Then he glanced at Marge and his grin widened. Her cheeks were as pink as new rosebuds, and her breath was coming too fast. She was sold on Freddie, and he was crazy about her. One of these days, Pop figured, they'd hitch up, and he was one hundred percent in favor of it.

Freddie was a top-hand all the way around. He was Sheriff Conway's right-hand man and wasn't

afraid of the devil himself. But Marge had a way of throwing a scare into him, and right now he was shifting his weight from one foot to the other like an overgrown schoolboy.

"Nice to see you, Freddie," Marge said, and her voice and eyes told the world that she meant it.

Freddie combed big fingers through his sandy hair. He acted as fussed as a kid caught stealing jam.

"Nice to see you, Marge," he said, his voice a little husky. Then he glanced uneasily at Pop. "Sheriff Conway sent me over, sir," he went on, fumbling in his pockets. "Here's a note for you."

Pop took the note and began to feel for his glasses. Must've left the danged things at home. He handed the note to Marge.

"Jim Conway can't write for sour apples," he said. "Maybe you can make it out, Marge."

Smiling, the girl glanced at the

note. Her smiling faded. "Dear Tom," she began uncertainly.

Pop smiled to himself. He'd known Jim Conway from the time Jim had worn diapers. Had taught him all he knew about shooting a gun and the law business. Not a better man in the State than Jim—

"As you know," Marge continued to read, "the Welch brothers are holing up some place in this part of the country, and those boys are bad medicine. I'm sending Freddie Star over to your town to sort of help you look after things while those three rascals are at large. Good luck and best wishes. Jim Conway."

As the import of the note soaked in, Pop Pindow hit the ceiling. He got up on his bandy legs and cussed. He flung his hat to the walk and kicked it half-way across the street.

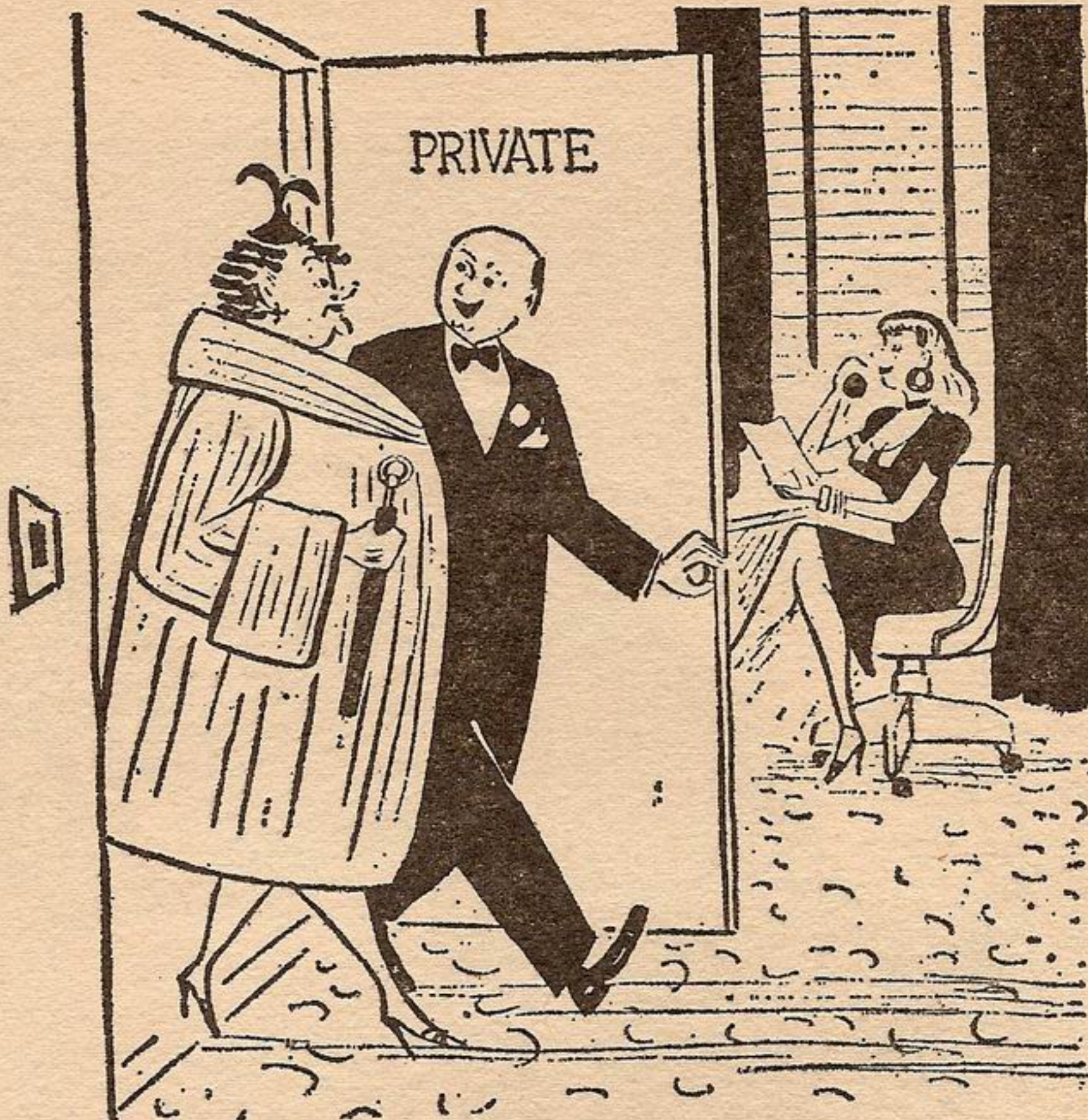
"You sure yuh read that right, Marge?" he yelled. "Yuh mean that Jim Conway don't think I can handle things here? That he sent a wet-eared, no-good kid to help me handle a couple of dirty—"

Gasping, Pop sank back in his chair. Dang this short-breath business, anyway. In a minute, he'd tell the world that he was still able to guard a two-bit bank. Give him paper and pencil — and his glasses — and he'd write a letter to Conway that would singe his hair.

"Now, Pop," Marge said worriedly, "don't take it like that. Mr Conway knows there are three Welches and only one of us, so—"

"Never saw three sidewinders yet I couldn't handle," Pop stormed. "Where's that danged Freddie Star? Freddie, come here."

Freddie came up. He'd gone out



"I know you'll like my new secretary dear, she could pass as your twin sister."

into the street to retrieve Pop's hat.

"Freddie," Pop shouted, "fork that cayuse an' high-tail it back to Junction. You tell that pin-headed Conway I said he could go straight to—"

"Sorry, Pop," Freddie said, "but Jim's orders were for me to stay

here until further notice. Reckon I'll stay."

Something in the young man's voice told Pop that Freddie was in North Butte to stay. He grabbed his hat, slapped it back over his white hair and glared up at the brown, good-looking face. Suddenly he hated Freddie Star. The very idea, the kid wearing a six-gun hung low as if he knew how to use it! The danged young whipper-snapper, and him goo-goo about Marge! Why, he wouldn't let Marge marry Freddie Star if was the last man on earth!

"I'll not get in your way, sir," Freddie went on quietly. "You just go ahead and run things as usual."

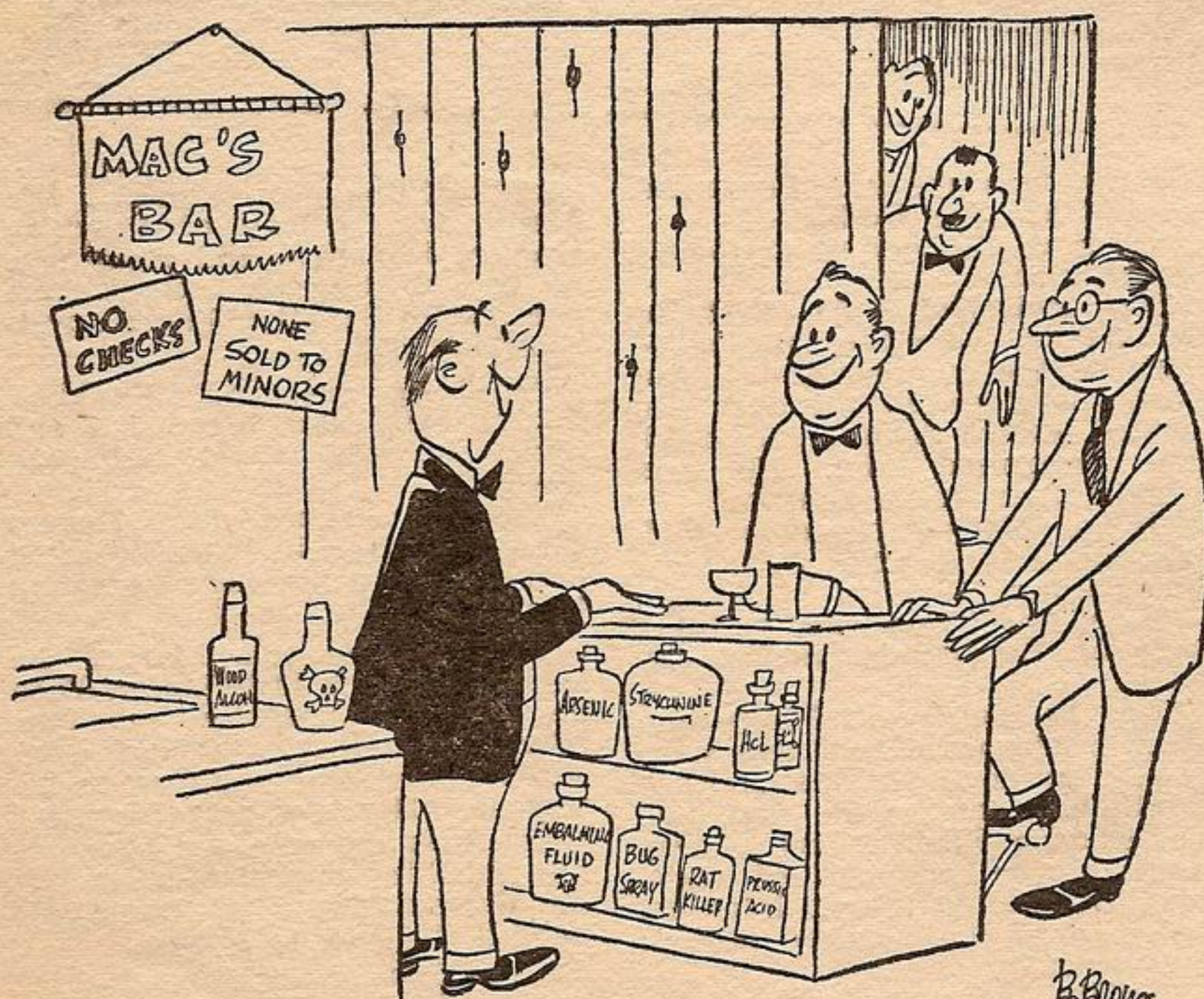
"You bet I'll run things as usual," Pop said fiercely. "An' I won't need you. Get outa my sight before I forget yuh're a kid who don't know any—"

"Yes, sir," Freddie said. Then as he turned toward his horse, "See you later, Marge."

"Anytime," Marge said, but her smile was a little doubtful, and the sun had gone out of her blue eyes.

Pop snorted and leaned back against the building. Freddie mounted his horse and rode toward the rooming house at the far end of the street. Without a word, Marge picked up her groceries and went on home. Pop sat like a statue until he'd cooled off a few degrees.

Commonsense told him that the sheriff had done the right thing



"Name your poison!"

in sending Freddie here, but Pop didn't like it. It was a slap in the face. A blow to his pride. It showed him that Jim Conway figured that he, Pop, was a has-been. It showed him a lot of things that he had kidded himself into not believing.

"Howdy, Sheriff."

Pop turned to stare down at the three admirig buttons.

"Sheriff," the red-headed Skinny asked, "wasn't that Freddie Star who rode up here a minute ago?"

"Uh-huh," Pop grunted.

"Gee," Stub said, his eyes shining, "he's a swell-lookin' feller. Wish I was big as him."

"I bet he can shoot faster'n lightnin'," Bob said.

"I bet the Welches won't try to rob the bank now," Skinny allowed.

Pop snorted disdainfully. "Yuh don't think them sidewinders would pay no mind to a young squirt like Star, do you?"

"I would if I was them," Stub said with a shiver.

Staring down at the kids, Pop suddenly realised that he was mighty close to losing three of his most loyal fans. Just as suddenly, he felt scared. And mighty dang-ed old and no-good.

He cleared his throat. "Did I ever tell yuh about the time I shot it out with Killer Reese? Reckon I didn't. Well, sir, this Killer Reese—"

Pop's voice trailed off. The kids weren't listening. They were watching Star lead his dun horse toward the livery barn.

Pop groaned to his feet and began to drag the old chair toward the office door. "Beat it, you kids," he said harshly. "I got work to do."

But he didn't have a thing to do. Just sit at his desk and cuss half-heartedly and feel old and washed-out. He guessed he ought to resign and retire to his ranch like Marge wanted him to do, but he was a stubborn old cuss. Besides, quitting now was the same as admitting he was no good, anymore. Also, if he quit, maybe the kids and everybody would figure he was just an old windbag. He shuddered slightly and brushed a hand across his eyes. He'd be dang-ed if he'd quit!

As the days passed, Pop would likely have reconciled himself to the state of things — Freddie Star being in town and keeping an eye on the bank — if it hadn't been for the attitude of his former admirers. The kids didn't flock around the deputy's office to listen wideeyed to his yarns about his past exploits. They were too busy following Freddie at a respectful distance. They had stopped swaggering in imitation of Pop and now walked in a loose, easy-swinging way just as Freddie walked. Also, Pop thought he detected a lessening of respect among the townspeople. Take old lady McKay, she hardly spoke when she met him on the street. So as the days passed, Pop's irritation grew.

"Danged up-start!" he muttered darkly one afternoon as he sat watching Freddie, who was walk-

ing along the other side of the street.

"What're you mumbling about, Pop?" Marge asked.

She was as pretty as a field of blooming clover and twice as sweet. She had a market basket over one bare arm, and with her other hand, reached out to rumple his white hair.

He flung her hand away angrily.

"Yuh're seein' too much of that Freddie Star," he said.

She looked startled. "But, Pop, I thought you liked—"

"The more I see of him, the less I like him," Pop cut in. "You stay away from him."

Marge didn't argue. She knew better. She knew what was behind her grandfather's anger. The old man was all she had, and she loved him. And she was in love with Freddie. She didn't know what to do to smooth things over. So being a very young girl, she went home and cried a little. Then she talked with Freddie, and being a very young man, he didn't know what to do about it, either.

"If he wasn't such a hard-headed old fool—" Freddie began.

"Don't talk about my grandfather like that!" Marge flared.

So they quarrelled a little and pretty soon they both got mad, and Freddie went stamping away.

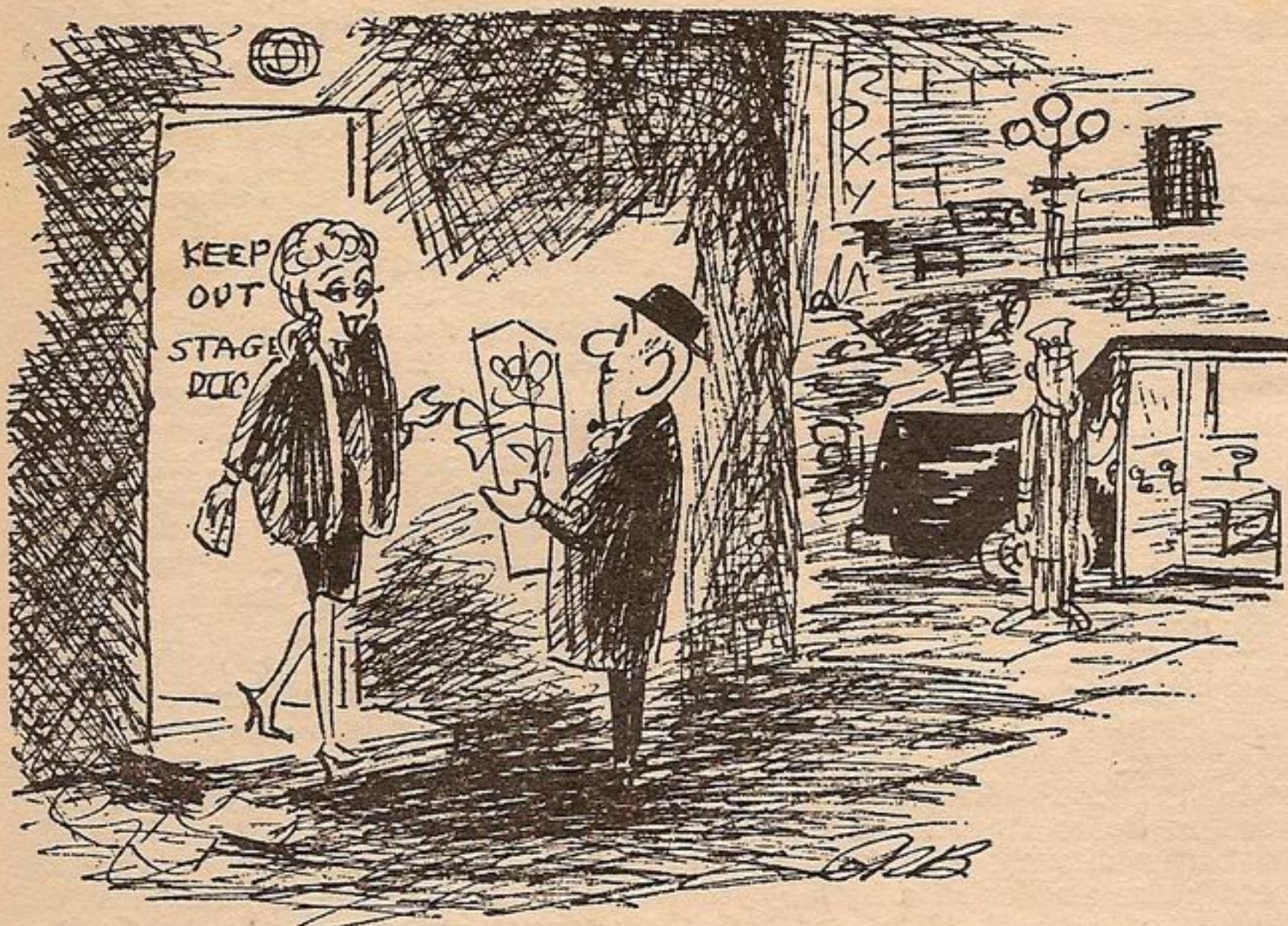
That left things in a mess all the way around, with Pop Pindow getting crustier and meaner all the time, Freddie feeling lower than a cattle tick's instep and Marge crying herself to sleep at night and holding her chin and shoulders a notch too high in the daytime.

Then came the payoff. It happened on a hot sunny Friday when there wasn't enough breeze to tickle the whiskers of a tomcat.

Pop sat in the old swivel chair in front of his office, hugging a strip of shade, his battered hat pulled over his eyes. It was close to chow time with the sun blazing straight overhead, but Pop wasn't hungry. It seemed that his dang-ed appetite had gone back on him ever since he'd told Marge to leave that long-legged coyote, Freddie Star, alone. Those dark circles under Marge's blue eyes had him worried. And he didn't like the way Freddie shuffled around the street, looking as if he'd lost all his get-up-and-go. Or the way Freddie and Marge would walk a block out of their way to avoid meeting each other. Dang it all, didn't they have sense enough to know better than to pay attention to what an old fool like him said?

Cussing softly through his whiskers, he shoved up his hat and opened his eyes. Three or four





"Miss Crowell couldn't make it tonight . . . I'm her understudy."

horses stood in front of the bank. Wasn't sure which, eyes had been bothering him more and more lately. Couldn't see close up or far away. If those danged glasses weren't such a give-away to a man's ageing, he'd wear 'em.

He started to close his eyes again to the sun's glare, but didn't. Something was going on in front of the bank. A lot of hollering and horse snorting. Too much dust being raised for a man to see plain. Besides he couldn't see that far, anyway. And then three horsemen came clattering down the street towards him like a herd of stampeding steers.

A shot rang out, and someone yelled, "Stop 'em!"

One of the riders flung a shot back over his shoulder, and Pop came erect in the old chair. Suddenly he knew what was going on.

While he'd been half-dozing and stewing about Marge and Freddie, the Welch brothers had slipped into town from the east, cleaned the bank and were heading west toward the badlands. At the moment, the three outlaws were right in front of him and putting the spurs to their charging mounts. Another 10 seconds, they'd be out of range.

Pop didn't take time to get up out of his chair. He pawed out the old .44 and levelled it with both hands.

"Stop or I'll shoot!" he bellowed.

The outlaws didn't stop. Both eyes open, Pop tried to line the leader up along the barrel. The way his eyes played tricks on him wasn't any laughing matter. But he squeezed the trigger and felt the old .44 kick. He thumbed back the hammer and fired again and again.

A rider crumpled out of his saddle and hit the dust like a sack of cement. The two remaining outlaws were shooting now. A

bullet fanned past Pop's whiskers and plowed into the wall behind him. He felt the wood splinters sting his neck. He squeezed out another shot, and another man went down and stayed down. Pop triggered again, but nothing hap-

pened. His gun was empty, but it didn't matter now. The third and last of the Welch brothers had flung his gun away and was holding both arms high.

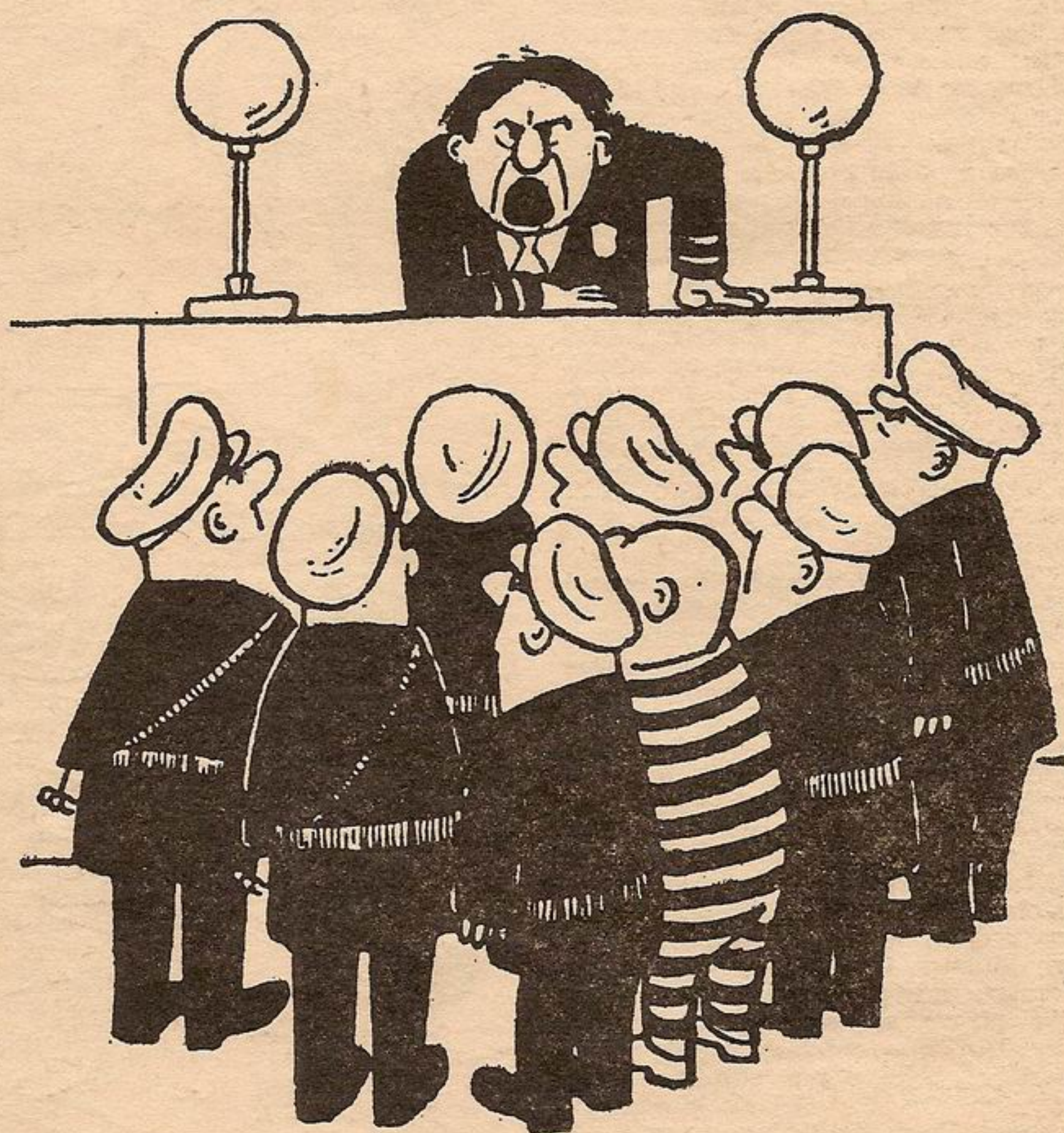
Shaking with excitement, his breath coming in short wheezes, the oldster shoved to his feet and stumbled toward the middle of the street. By the time he reached the outlaws, half the town was there, including the three buttons, Skinny, Stub and Bob. And coming up at a brisk trot was Freddie Star with a smoking six still in his hand.

Pop stuck out his chest a trifle. "Guess that'll learn all the side-winders in the State to stay outa my territory," he said.

"Gee whiz!" the three buttons said.

For a moment, Pop gazed about at the admiring faces of his audience. He felt fine. Weak-kneed and tired, but as salty as a two-year-old. Then he turned his attention to the fallen outlaws, and suddenly he was plumb scared. And a little sick to his stomach. Every shot he'd fired had missed!

Both men had been shot squarely through the head. Pop had aimed for the heart. Another thing, he'd seen a lot of holes punched by his .44 slugs, and these bullet holes, he somehow knew, were not of his making. And the angle of the holes was not quite



" . . . and remember, he's very clever. Think of the most unlikely place he'd be and that's where you'll find him!"

right to be made by a man sitting in a chair in front of the deputy's office.

Pop pulled his eyes up to Freddie Star's grinning face. Freddie had put away his gun and was standing there with his long arms folded. A good-looking hombre with the best years of his life yet before him.

"Pop," Freddie said, "you sure dead-centred those skunks. Man, oh man!"

"Just like he got that gang of train robbers," the red-headed Skinny piped up. "Aimed with both eyes an' let 'em have it!"

Pop swallowed and found his voice. "It weren't nothing," he said modestly. "I just happened to be settin' there in easy range, an'—" But honesty got the better of him. "Looky, yuh folks, I didn't—"

At that moment, Freddie slapped him so hard on the back that it liked to knocked all the wind out of him.

"Never saw anything like it, Pop," Freddie shouted. "You blazin' away with that old gun and knockin' 'em out of their saddles like they were sittin' ducks. Sheriff Conway was sure crazy to think that you needed me around."

Before Pop could get his breath, Freddie was herding him across the street away from the crowd.

"Pop," he said, "you sure haven't lost your trigger finger."

Pop squinted at the young man. The danged fool, didn't he recognise his own bullet holes when he saw them? Then he saw something in Freddie's eyes that told him the answer. Freddie was no fool. He knew who had killed the men.

"Mebbe I ain't lost my trigger finger," Pop growled, "but you know as well as I do that I didn't hit—"

"Pop," Freddie interrupted, "if you hadn't started banging away and slowed those fellows up, they'd got away sure. Just because I happened to accidentally hit a couple of 'em is no reason for you to go shootin' off your mouth about it."

Pop glanced back over his shoulder. The three buttons were staring at him as if they were seeing the eighth wonder of the world. Pop lifted a hand and waved.

The oldster stuck out his chest a trifle. Maybe he had missed the bandits a mile, but he'd gone in there, swinging. He hadn't let the kids down, or anybody, or himself. He had done his best, and a man could do no more. But it was time to quit.

"Guess I've done my share of badge-packin'," he said. "Reckon I'll retire. Marge's been after me to — hey, that reminds me, it's dinner time. Let's go see what Marge's got cooked up."

"I better not," Freddie said, looking scared. "She's sore at me, and—"

"Come on, yuh danged idiot!" Pop said.

And Freddie did.



"Sure I think a man should have respect for the girl he marries. What's that got to do with us?"

PLAY IT BY EAR

(Continued from page 4)

It was heavy, and it took him only seconds to see why. Besides the usual woman clutter, there was his own .45 Colt automatic in the bottom of her bag. He recognised it instantly by the nick in the handle. He'd had a permit for it because of the sums of money he gathered from the shops to the main office before depositing it in the bank. The gun had disappeared along with the 20,000 from the safe. Only Eby and Alex were supposed to know that combination. But Lois had been there several times when Alex opened it, and she was sharp, very sharp, she probably knew that combination after the first time he opened it in her presence.

Alex removed the clip and ejected the bullet from the chamber. He replaced the clip and then

put the gun back in her purse. He lay back on the bed. She was up to something—but what?

Lois came out of the shower. "Up and at it, buster. Shower while I get the food ready."

Alex began going over the whole series of events that led up to his stretch in prison.

Eby had owned a small music shop that had never done too well. Alex had gone to work for him as a salesman. Tape recorders were just beginning to become popular and Alex had lined up an import line the shop could get. Eby had liked the idea — in fact he'd been like a kid with a new toy about the recorders. He had been afraid to risk borrowed money, but then Lois took over and convinced him to do it. Eby had a good reputation and was able to borrow the money to finance importing the recorders. They were a relatively low priced machine and had sold like wildfire and hotcakes.

As a result, the business at Eby's Music Shoppes had doubled, tripled and quadrupled within a year's time. Eby made Alex a junior partner. Everything had been going great, and then suddenly he found himself framed as an embezzler.

After they had eaten, and were on the old sofa, she asked, "What are your plans, Alex?"

He shrugged. "Not much choice for a parolee. I work at what I can get. For a parolee that's usually hard and dirty with low pay."

"Yes. But I meant Eby. Do you intend to—hurt him?"

He shook his head. "No. I got over that. I wanted to kill him for awhile, but it just doesn't seem important any more."

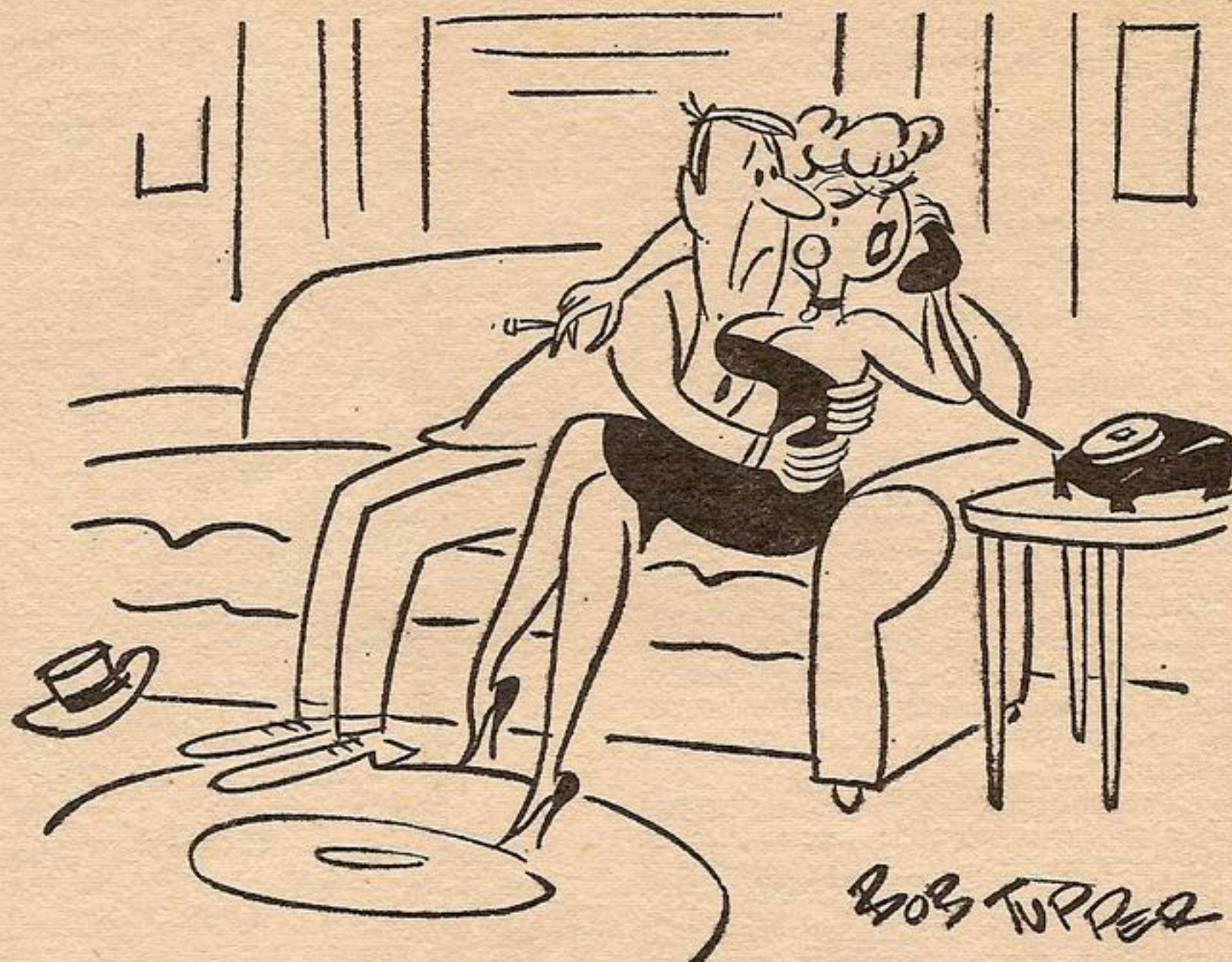
"I'm glad, Alex. We'll get us a small place, I'll work. That'll make it easier. I have a little money saved."

Alex did a quick mental double-take — the two of them back together? But what about Eby? Then it hit him — obviously, Lois thought that he, Alex, didn't know she had remarried.

He was watching her as alertly as he dared. She was getting around to her real mission. A tiny frown was puckering her brow.

"Lois, what is it? I've noticed that look about you, the way you used to be when you had something on your mind."

She nodded. "You always see through me, don't you, darling?"



"Not much . . . what are you doing?"

Yes, I do have something on my mind — Eby. He's frightened, Alex. He's convinced that you intend to kill him. I was told that he was going to have you killed. He could, Alex—a frightened man is dangerous."

"To hell with Eby. Let him worry."

"Alex, please, we want to start fresh."

He kissed her. "All right, kitten, you always were the great one for ideas, let's have it. So he thinks I intend to kill him."

"You could talk to him, Alex, please, for my sake — and yours."

"To hell with him. Why should I? I was the one who went to prison."

"A girl I know — she runs with a tough crowd, gangsters—found out I'd been married to you. She hinted someone had been contacted to kill you. I want you alive, Alex. I love you!"

He studied her a moment, his face stiff. "You're really serious."

Her face glowed. "Oh, Alex, darling. Let me set up a meeting. You can say you're ready to forget, let it go. It would be hard, I know, Alex, real hard, but it's for us. Our future. Please?"

"If it means that much, okay, but I'd rather throttle him."

"I'll call him now. Oh, darling, you won't be sorry. I'll make it up to you." She hurried out.

She wants us together, he thought. Why? Eby was the timid type, not the kind to hire a killer. He'd run to the police. Alex had threatened to kill Eby, that was true, and before a courtroom full of people. But that had been temper and frustration because he believed Eby had embezzled from his own company, collected the insurance on the theft and framed him. Sober thought later had erased that motive — the business was booming — Eby was solvent. He had no reason to steal. But Lois had a reason — the money first, ridding herself of a husband second, and Eby had more money third. Now she was about to cash in again — and again, he apparently was the patsy.

That gun! With Eby dead Lois would own the entire business! Why the little bitch! The murder-



"We started out reading poetry but somehow we got off on athletics."

ing little bitch! She was setting him up for a murder rap this time!

Alex leaped to his feet, rage making him sick at his stomach. Then he slowly sank back to the lumpy sofa. *Easy now*, he thought, *no anger*. He had removed the shells from the gun. If he could pull the plot out of her with a witness, even Eby... But he couldn't count on that. Eby was easily rattled...

Lois burst back into the room, her face aglow, eyes sparkling. "He'll do it, Alex. Eby will see you. I brought him around. He was frightened at first, but I convinced him. I always could, remember?"

"I remember. All right, honey..."

Jerome Eby lived in a new housing development, a prosperous area with spacious landscaped lawns, and low ranch-type houses. Lois whipped her convertible into the drive with a familiar expertness.

She said, "He said for us to come right in, he'd be in the den."

Alex followed her through the door, across the living room into a short hallway, then to the den door. She opened it and went inside. He followed her, his guts growling with suspense.

Jerome Eby sat behind a large desk, a slight man with a nearly bald head. His mouth slacked open as he stared at them, startled. His eyes popped. He jumped to his feet, a badly frightened man.

"W-what are you doing here? How dare you break into my house. I'll have you sent back to prison!" His voice squeaked.

"Lois called you, Eby," Alex said. "Stop the damn dramatics. She wanted me to tell you I didn't mean that threat I made. I just want to be let alone, and I'll let you alone. Okay?"

"Lois!" Eby squeaked. "What's the meaning of this? Did he force you to bring him here? Call the police!"

Alex looked at Lois. "You didn't call Eby at all, did you, Lois?"

She was drawing on a pair of gloves, her red lips smiling, her eyes were very blue and bright. "No. I didn't call him, Alex. He would have bolted like a rabbit."

"Get out!" Eby shouted at Alex. "Get out! You steal my money—now you're making up to my wife, trying to steal her back. Get out!"

"Jerome and I are married, Alex," Lois said smiling.

"I know," Alex said calmly. "Eby didn't take that money I went to prison for, Lois, you took it, didn't you? So you could divorce me and marry him."

"Yes and I still have it, Alex, darling, in a safety deposit box. Jerome has been quite generous with money. You see, Alex, you would never have amounted to a damn. You were satisfied to be merely the manager of Eby's stores, making money for him, then coming home to make love. Yes, I set up this meeting. I'm about to become a very wealthy

widow. You did threaten, Eby, Alex, to kill him."

Eby's face was slack. "Widow! What widow?"

Lois suddenly had the automatic in her hand. "Your widow, Eby, dear. This is his gun!" She pulled the trigger.

There was a click. She cocked and triggered the weapon again. Another click. Eby was frozen, gaping in paralysed panic at the woman trying to murder him.

Alex said, "It's no use, Lois, I took the shells from the gun in my apartment. It's empty."

Her face was a snarling mask now. She hurled the weapon at Alex. He dodged, caught it as it bounced from the panelled wall. Lois went around the desk like a jungle cat, struck Eby in the chest with her shoulder, bowled him over his chair into the corner. She snatched open a drawer, and came up with a snubnosed revolver.

She threw a vicious glance at Eby who was trying to get to his feet, weakly flailing, a dazed expression on his face from his bald head bouncing off the wall.

"I'll just shoot you, darling, with Eby's gun, then I'll choke him to death and claim you did it! After he shot you!"

Alex's belly was hard as a board. This was the thing that had given him goose pimples, the unexpected. If he could just stall her until Eby got his wits back.

"Why, Lois? Do you hate me that much?"

"No. I hate to lose you, you're great in bed. But a wealthy widow can find plenty of men." She shot a glance at Eby who was staring at her in horror. "Goodbye, darling!"

Alex lunged aside as she fired. The slug hit his left arm, turning him a little, and he kept turning, and flung the heavy .45 with his



LUTNER

"I'd like to tell you where I've been all night but there's no point in getting you all upset."

added momentum, full at her with all his strength. His head seemed to explode as she fired a second time.

The room was full of people when Alex regained consciousness. His arm had a temporary bandage on it, a doctor was trying to burn his head off with some kind of antiseptic. Eby was sunk laxly on a studio couch, talking to a plain-clothes man.

"Lieutenant, we'll need some stitches in this head. Can we take him now?"

The lieutenant left Eby, came over and stood looking down at Alex. Eby ventured up behind him. "Well, hello, Alex," the lieutenant said. "A pretty busy night for a parolee, don't you think? Haven't you any sense at all?"

"I'm not the criminal type, lieutenant. Or I'd have known better. I hope Eby filled your little pink ears with truth and light."

"It's the shot I gave him," the doctor explained.

"Maybe being in prison changed your luck, Gilford," the lieutenant said. "Mr Eby gave us the story, and he also has a tape recorder installed in his desk. The minute you came in, he turned it on. Lois

tried to convince us you guys had framed her — then Mr Eby played the tape . . ."

Eby edged up. "Alex, I'm sorry. I never once dreamed she . . . that Lois had . . ."

"I know," Alex said. "Neither did I for a long time."

"I'll have a lawyer get busy," Eby said. "Get you a full pardon. I—I wish you'd take over the shops, Alex. I'll pay your full salary all the time you were gone . . . gone."

Alex opened his mouth for a blast, then closed it again. Eby was honest enough. He'd really thought Alex had taken that money. Hell, why should he complain about back pay and a good job?

"Okay, doc," the lieutenant said. "Take him away." To Alex, he said, "I'll get your statement later, Gilford. And if it's any comfort to you, you just about ruined Mrs Eby's face with that .45. She'll look like hell when she heals, and I doubt she'll get much plastic surgery in prison."

"Sure, lieutenant," Alex said, "sure." Somehow he felt a little sorry for Lois. She'd had everything planned so beautifully. ●

DANGER IN PARADISE

(Continued from page 9)

He paused in his feast to watch the girls, but when he did, Bintu, the chieftain, prodded his elbow. He was smiling when Lantin turned to him.

"Kaniya," the old man said. It meant eat. Lantin knew that. "A pleasure, my friend," Lantin said in English with a slight nod. And he took up a rib of suckling pig and bit into it, the juices running over his heavy lips, on to his chin and chest. He continued eating as he watched the dancing girls.

The drums began to beat faster and faster until it seemed impossible that the girls could move their bodies with such speed, but they did. The dance took on a frenzied quality now. Their young faces had wild looks about them and their bodies sweating in the firelight were as beautifully sensuous as anything Lantin had ever seen in his life.

When it seemed that the drums could beat no faster, they came to a sudden halt, all of them ending on a single, miraculous beat. The girls then grabbed hold of Lantin's greasy hands, pulled his tremendous, stuffed body to his feet and led him past the fire and the other men and women who laughed and cheered him as he was led away.

They dragged his stumbling big body through not more than 100 yards of jungle, the girls laughing all the way, Lantin crying out for them to slow down, but laughing, breathing as if he were a locomotive.

When they reached the empty beach, the girls let go of Lantin, he fell exhausted to the white sands. The girls fell to the ground all around him. Their half-naked bodies had a soft glow in the moonlight. Lantin could hear the gentle rush of waves upon the beach.

The girls lay or sat on the sand, making a circle around Lantin. Their eyes were all on him. Some of them chattered words he could not understand. "This is the sort of party that makes a man's life worthwhile," he said.

One of the girls moved in close to Lantin. She took one of his hands and placed it upon her body. He grinned. The girl said a single word he had never heard before. She said it softly as if it were a very special, perhaps even an obscene word. When she saw that Lantin did not understand her, she took his hand and placed it on the leg of another girl and then on the arm of a third and finally upon the flat stomach of a fifth. With each girl, she said the word again and each girl nodded and smiled at Lantin in a way that could mean only one thing. What she was trying to tell him was simply that he had his choice of any of them—or, if he so wished—all of them.

And John Lantin spent the entire night upon those white sands, his huge body cradled in more than a dozen pairs of naked arms.



"I never saw a faster typist!"



"... Saved!"

Life continued in this manner for Lantin for three more months. He ate more, drank more, loved more than he ever had before in twice that length of time. It seemed as if every young girl in the village had no other aim in life than to share his bed for a night or a week.

But then, Liani, the lovely girl he had chosen as his favorite, to live in his hut with him, explained to him the real meaning of everything that was happening to him.

He understood the language now. As she told him the story, he was almost sorry he did understand.

The people of her tribe were feeding him this way because one day they would eat him. They had never seen such a huge man. They could hardly believe any man could have so much flesh on one body, she told him. Now they were feeding him to see how big he would finally get. When they saw he was getting no fatter, they would kill and eat him.

Lantin could hardly believe his ears. When Liani saw his shock, she explained quickly that it was an honor to be sacrificed to the gods. He would be a sacrifice, didn't he understand that? And to be killed as a sacrifice means that the gods will be sure to love you.

John Lantin merely groaned and lost his appetite and started immediately to think of some way of escape.

While he was planning his es-

cape, however, he realised that he would have to continue gaining weight to stay alive. And so he began eating even more than usual—enormous, ridiculous amounts of food. A horse would not have been able to devour as much food as he did. He seemed to be eating constantly from early morning

until late at night. And every time Bintu or any of the other men of the village looked at him, he would inhale, blow out his cheeks a bit and wonder just how much more flesh his bones would possibly be able to hold.

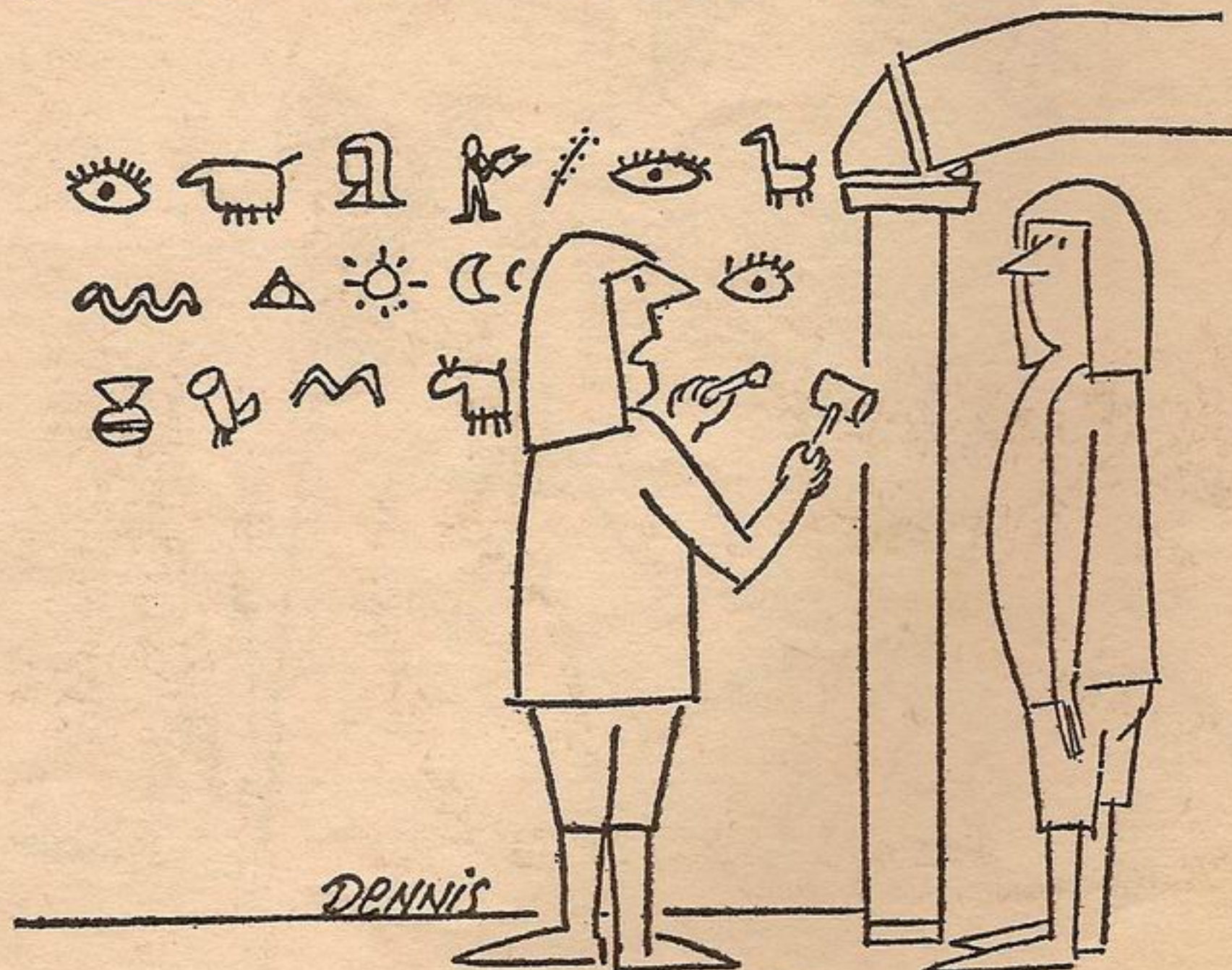
In time, of course, he realised that it was impossible to go on this way. He had gained at least 40 pounds. He could hardly move.

And so one night, when Liani lay asleep on the woven mat beside him, Lantin rose quietly, slowly. He tiptoed out of the hut, carrying his shoes like a drunken husband sneaking home at 4 am. There was not a sign of life in the village. He could hear snoring as he passed one hut after the other. He heard giggles from one of the huts and he walked faster, skirting a wider circle around that doorway.

He made his way through the jungle, branches and thorns scratching at him. He could hear birds crying out in the dark.

When he came to the bay, he saw the pirogues lined up on the shore. It was a deep-cut bay, more like a twisting fiord than a bay, surrounded by mountains. Stars shined in the calm waters. There was a half-moon through the leaves and a warm breeze, moved gently, like a whisper, through the dark.

Lantin selected what looked to be the largest of the pirogues. He pushed it slowly down the sand, out into the shallow water and then pulled himself up into the boat with a great grunting effort. He sat back on the board that was placed across the gunwales. He took up one of the rough-hewn paddles, but he did not have the chance to use it, because just as he was about to dip the paddle into the still waters, the pirogue started slowly to sink. Lantin rushed to the middle of the boat so as to balance it, but that did no good. Under his weight, the



"Do you spell 'with an ' or an '?"

small boat slowly went under, the water running in over his feet until he was standing shoulder deep, the boat resting comfortably on the bottom under him.

With a sigh of despair, Lantin stepped out of the sunken hulk and waded back to shore. He sat down on the beach and there, for the first time in his life, he gave up all hope. The island was much too small for him to hide anywhere for any length of time. There was no escape.

But when he returned to his hut and found Liani awake, waiting for him, he found out from the girl that there was a way out of it for him. It was a dangerous, almost impossible way, she explained and that was why she had not said anything about it before.

There was a custom, she told Lantin, that anyone chosen as a sacrifice to the gods has a choice of either being killed quickly and then eaten, or to take the trial by combat. The trial by combat consists in fighting for an entire night with four men of the tribe. If by morning he can still continue to fight, then he will not die; he will be allowed to live as a member of the tribe. But if the four men subdue him before morning, then he will not die quickly; he will suffer a horrible

end — to be roasted slowly to death, an ordeal that takes many hours. And then, of course, he will be eaten by the tribe at a great feast.

In his present condition, John Lantin did not see how he could possibly fight four men for five minutes let alone an entire night. But if a man must die, it matters little how he dies, because at the end of it he is dead and that is all there is to it and Lantin was a man with too much living in him to accept any kind of death.

When he announced to Bintu that he wished to take the trial by combat, the old man seemed a bit perplexed.

"No man has ever survived it," he told Lantin.

"No man has ever survived being killed either," Lantin pointed out.

"But to be roasted slowly . . ."

"Forget it," Lantin said. "If I'm to be on the menu, I don't want to hear how the sauce is prepared."

"You will fight then?" the old man asked him.

Lantin nodded. "I'm as big as four men anyway," he said.

The chief shrugged. "As you wish," he said.

The night of the trial the entire village turned out as if for a carnival — which, indeed, the affair

was. The girls were bedecked in colorful wreaths of oleanders and Turk's cap and poinsettias, almandas and at least a dozen other flowers. The men were all in ceremonial dress, wearing capes that had been woven out of palm leaves, decorated with flowers and shells and sharks' teeth. There were suckling pigs being turned over the great fire in the centre of the village. There were platters of breadfruit, plantains, small red bananas, taro leaves in pork fat, banana and arrowroot pudding and many other native delicacies.

As soon as the moon came up off in the eastern sky, showing its pale light through the dense jungle dark, Bintu rose slowly, lifted his arm and immediately the drums and the dancing stopped. Everyone became quiet. All eyes turned to Lantin.

The old man clapped his hands four times and four tall, powerful young men stepped forward. In the firelight, their muscular bodies seemed to Lantin as if they had been carved out of stone.

"It is time," Bintu said to Lantin.

Slowly, with a heavy sigh, he got to his feet. Each of the four men nodded at him and then backed off a bit into a large clearing to one side of the fire.

Lantin removed his shirt, dropped to the ground at his feet.

"Well now . . ." he started. But he did not go on. He saw the four young men waiting for him. He walked slowly toward them, arms out to catch the first rush.

But when the first of them came at him, Lantin merely bounced the youth off his huge stomach. The young man went flying on his back and this brought a great burst of laughter from the spectators. He enjoyed their laughter and he laughed himself, patting his stomach. "You see, it comes in handy too," he said.

He met the next five rushes in this same way, feinting over to one side, then charging in, stomach shoved out in front of him like a battering ram and each time he would knock one of the young men over.

Then he saw them begin to fan out around him and he knew the fun was over.

"We start now," he muttered.

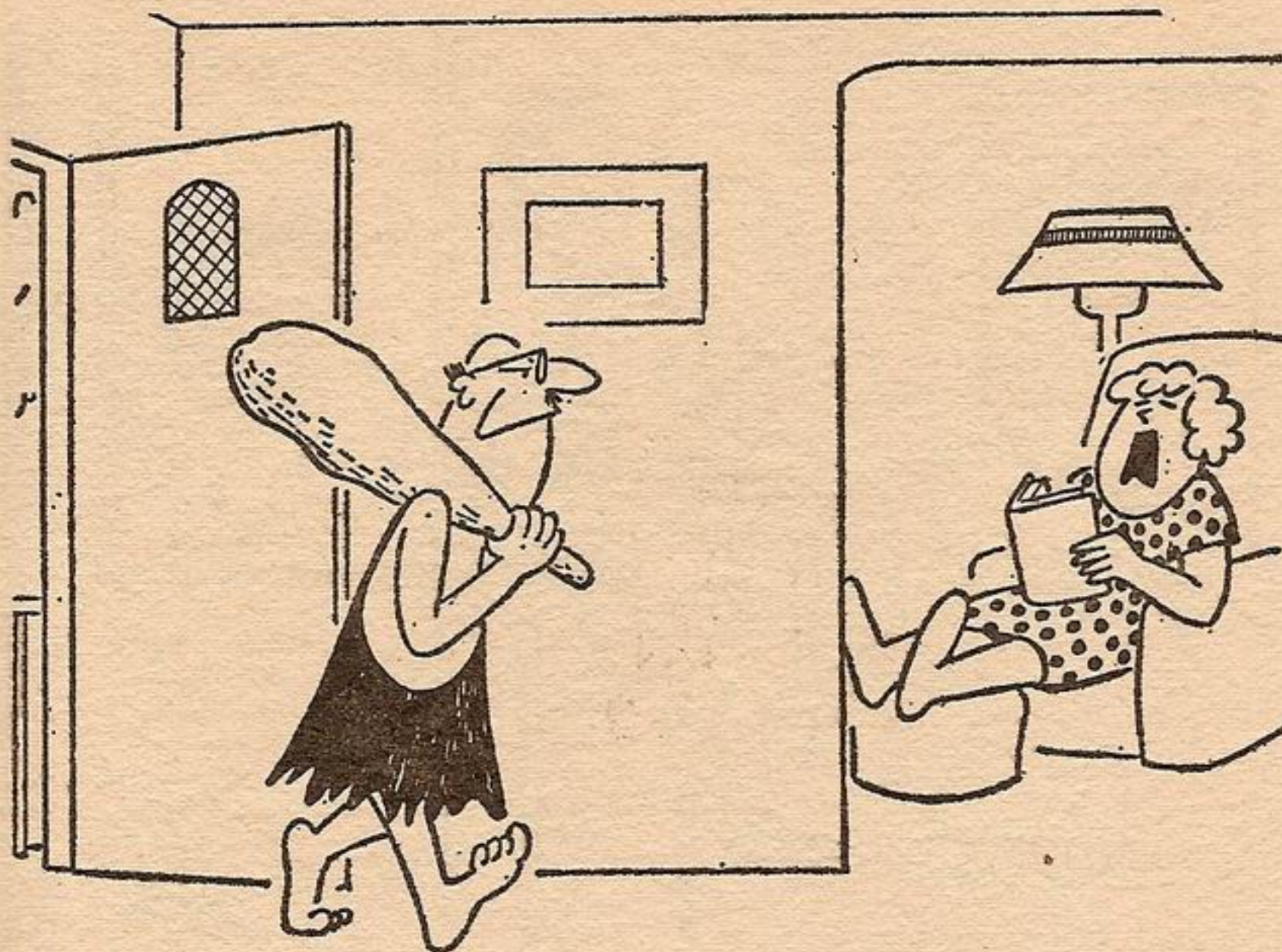
They rushed at him from four sides, grabbing his arms and legs. Lantin twisted his body about with surprising speed. He fought now like a great beast. He kicked two of them away. Another he lifted into the air and threw him at least 10 feet through the air.

But the young men kept coming back at him. The fight quickly mounted to a savage pitch. Lantin swung his arms wildly to keep them off him. And they dove in to grab at his legs, to try and topple him over. But he stood upright and he fought them off, time and time again.

Little by little the fight dragged its slow way down towards the jungle. Caught in the thick brush, Lantin could not use his weight to complete advantage. He started



"Ssh! My wife's still asleep."



"Well, speak up stupid, what did the marriage counsellor say?"

going for one of them at a time now. He would grab one of them by the throat and nearly choke the life out of him, but the other three would always be on top of him so he never had time to finish any one of them off.

"I'll have to tear you to pieces, lads," Lantin said in a breathless voice, as they stood back to get their breath too. "You're good lads, but a man's got to live, you see."

They came at him again. He could feel their fists digging into his soft body. One of his eyes was almost completely closed. His breath came in painful gasps. He kept looking to the sky for some sign of light, but he knew it would take many hours for the dawn to come—if it ever did come.

The five men fought for a long time in the jungle brush. Birds kept screaming and flying up, startled out of bushes as the five of them went crashing through one thicket after another.

When they finally came out of the jungle onto the beach, Lantin thought he would surely fall now. He did not know what was keeping him on his feet, but he was sure that if they ever succeeded in knocking him over, he would never be able to get up again.

The pace of the battle had slowed down considerably. It all had the appearance of a slow-motion nightmare now. The men seemed almost to be fighting in their sleep, they moved that way.

And then he realised that he had one of them by the throat again. The young man was gasping, fighting with all his might to break Lantin's grip. The others fought furiously to make him let go of their companion. Lantin then threw the young body down upon the sand. In a blind, exhausted stupor, he stepped on the young man's chest and he heard the

bones cracking under his feet and a moment's horrible scream of pain.

When he stepped back, he could see by the moon's light that the young man was dead. His chest looked like a deflated balloon.

The others paused for a moment, looked at their fallen companion. And then they came at Lantin with a renewed vigor. This time, each of them came with two hands full of sand. They threw the sand in Lantin's face, at his eyes. He

reeled around, pressing his eyes tightly shut to stop the sudden blind burning. They were on top of him before he could face them again. He could hardly see now. Everything was part of one enormous blur in front of him as he stumbled on down the beach toward the water, carrying the three men on his back, feeling their blows pounding his body, his head.

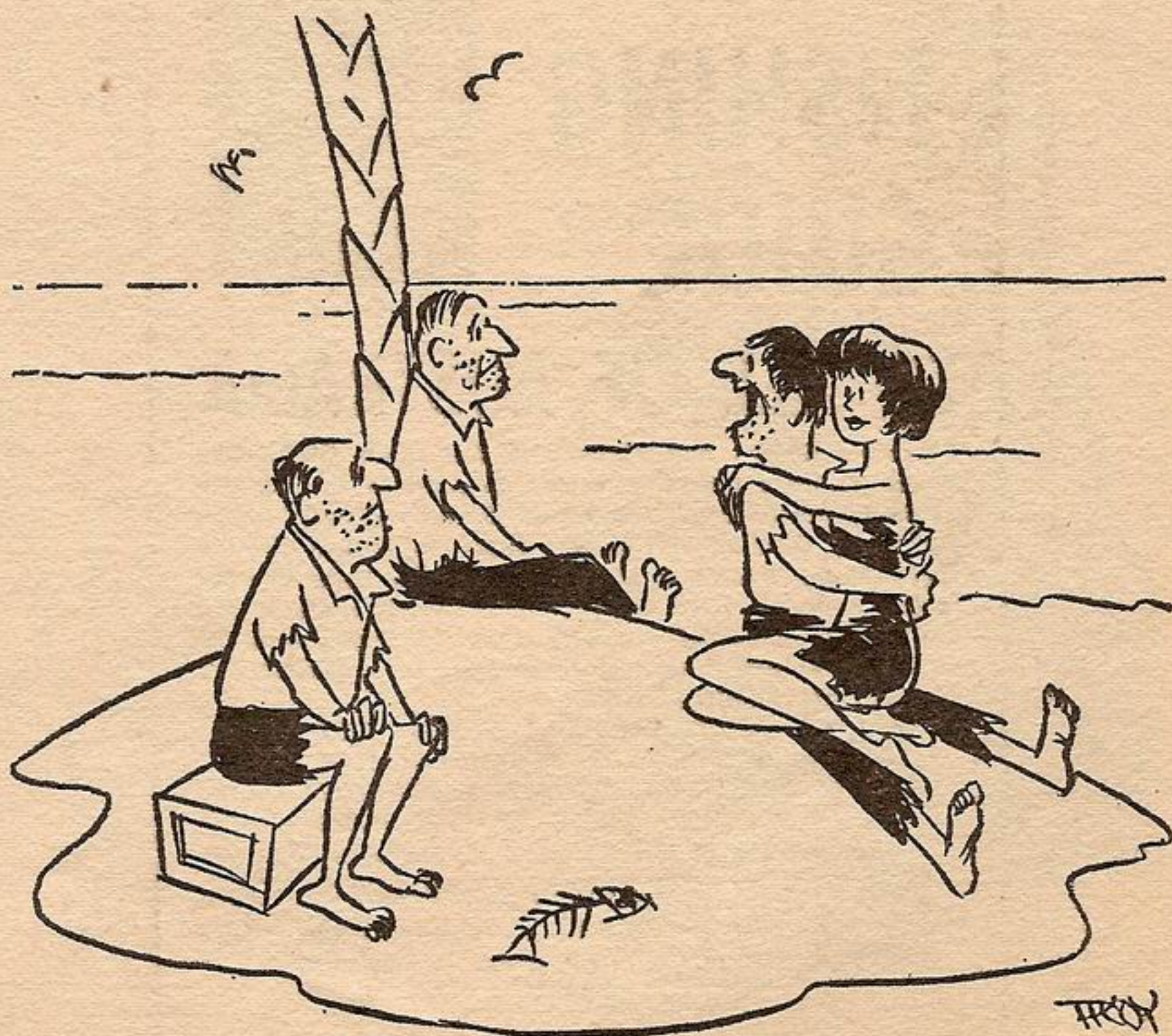
He waded out into the water until it came to his waist. The water would cut down their speed, he told himself. His weight would be of more use to him this way. And it was. The young men found themselves slowed down considerably, fighting in the surf this way.

The beach was crowded with men and women from the village. They had followed the battle through the jungle. They would watch it until there was an ending of one sort or another.

Lantin could not believe his eyes when he saw the first pale rays of light off in the eastern sky. He was only sure that it was the sun rising when he saw the three men step back in the water, all of them breathing heavily, exhausted, bleeding. Then he heard a loud cheer from the beach. He saw the three men start to walk slowly back towards the beach, and as if he were tied to them by the bond of this combat, he followed after them, pushing his body slowly through the mounting surf.

He stumbled up on the sand and there he fell into a sitting position. The three men he had been fighting came to where he was and each of them embraced his shoulders, nodding. "Av," was all Lantin could say to any of them.

It was well over a week before



"Man, this is the life!"

Lantin had the strength to move about again. But while he was still lying in his hut, with Liani at his side, tending his every need, Bintu and several other men of the village came to him and told him that now he was one of them. He was their brother.

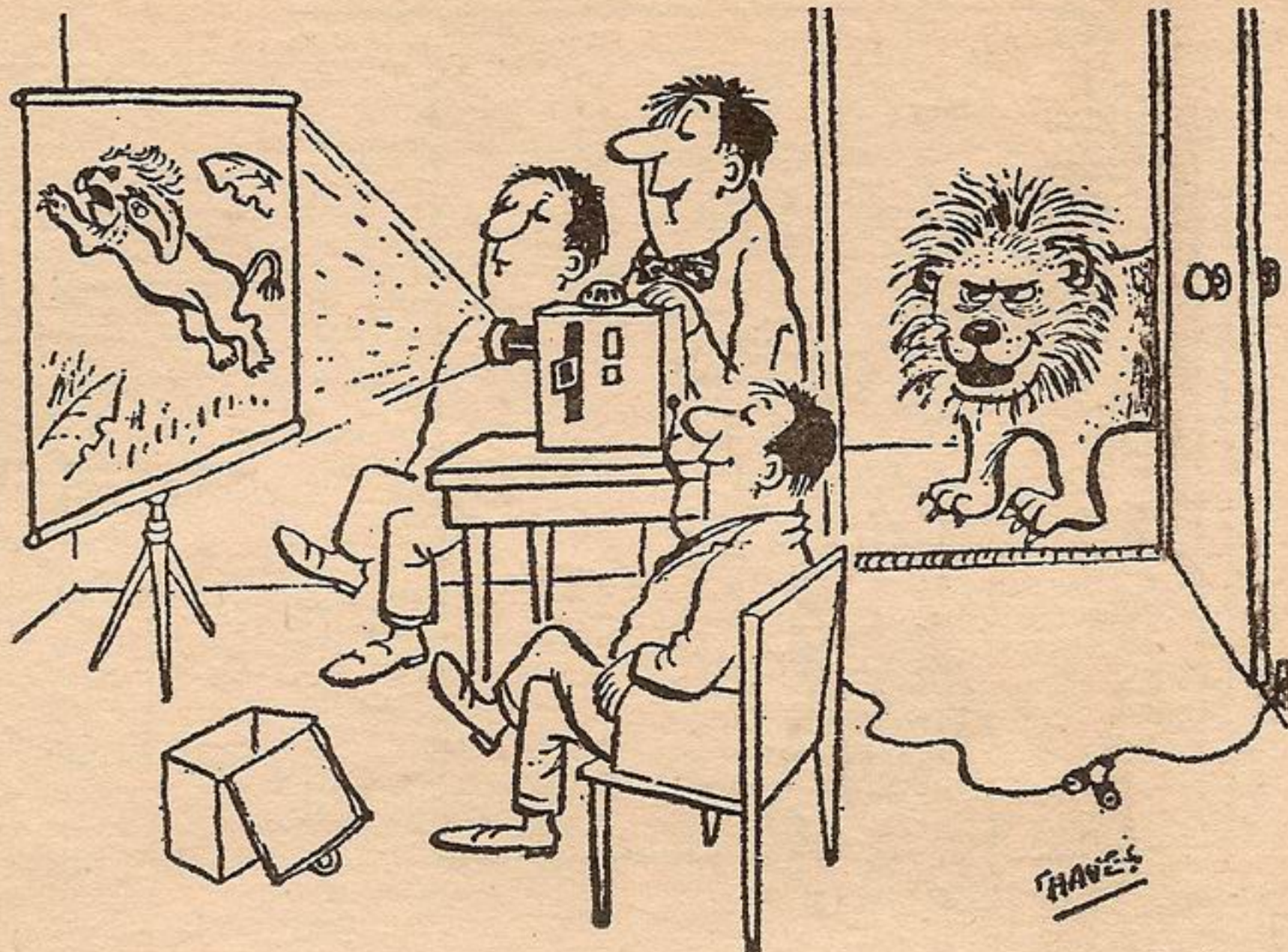
"My people," Bintu said to him, "they are proud to have you as their brother."

John Lantin, from that day on, had no further thoughts of ever leaving this island that was truly a paradise.

Two years after the day of Lantin's trial by combat, the old chief, Bintu, died. But when he was on his deathbed, he called for Lantin to come to him. He was surrounded by the elders of the tribe.

"Now I am going," Bintu said. "When I was a young man, I was very strong. A strong man must always care for my people. That is the law." He paused and one of the girls came to wipe the old man's perspiring face with a wet cloth. Then he looked up at Lantin again and continued. "You are a man of strength, my son," he said. "There is no man among my people who has such strength. And so . . . so you will be the one to take care of them now. You will be Bintu now. Chief . . . you will be chief."

The old man died later that same day. And John Lantin was hailed by the people of the island as their chief.



"Although I escaped, I certainly had to admire the beast's determination to track me down."

Some five years later, on April 6th, 1961, the American merchantman *Davis* dropped anchor in the bay of Lantin's island. The captain of the *Davis* and 10 men came ashore. Lantin and most of the people of the island gathered on the beach to greet the American sailors.

When the captain of the *Davis*, Henry Aberly, discovered that the chief of these islanders was an American, he could hardly believe his eyes and ears. Lantin was amused by his surprise. Captain Aberly immediately offered to take Lantin back to America. But as they feasted around the great fire in the centre of the village, John Lantin told Aberly and his men the story of how he had come to the island, how he had fought for his life, how he had lived here as men were truly made to live.

When he had finished his story, he turned to one of the women and said something to her the captain could not understand. Moments later, she returned with three other women and 10 children.

Lantin beamed proudly. "Here I am in paradise," he told Aberly, "and you kind gentlemen offer to take me back to hell!"

He turned to the women and children behind him. All the children were extremely fat. "You see, captain," John Lantin said, "I am busy here putting a little flesh back on the skinny bones of the human race."

And then he laughed again, reached up and took two of the children onto his enormous lap. He handed each of them a chunk of meat: "Eat," he said to the captain. Then turning to his wives and his other children, he said, "Eat! Eat!" And the children gathered around him and all of them began eating with such feverish delight, Captain Aberly and his men could only watch in amazement as this mountain of a man kept passing bits of food around to one child, then the next, eating himself all the while, laughing, chatting, letting them climb all over him, all of them caught up in the immensely joyous spirit of this feast that seemed as if it would never end.

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KILLERS ON HIS TRAIL

(Continued from page 13)

Jeanne Duschnes. Nationality: French citizen. Age: 24. Suspected of recruiting seamen in Star of Beirut Cafe, owned by George Sifak, Lebanese citizen, as smuggling couriers. No criminal record with Scotland Yard, French Surete or Interpol. Will investigate further. Caulfield.

"Right here at the end," Woodward commented, "seems to be the logical point for me to start. I take it that instead of using its own members as couriers the ring uses ordinary seamen. A different one each time would make spotting difficult. I'd like to contact your agent, Caulfield. He might prove helpful."

Merriman shook his head slowly. "About that last sentence in Caulfield's report: 'Will investigate further.' Unfortunately it proved to be his epitaph."

From the time Woodward left Merriman's office until he boarded the ship at Liverpool, he was tailed by one man. Woodward, however, was unaware of this. After the *Donna Luisa* sailed, the man went directly to a cable office and sent a message to a Lebanese named Alexander Kouri, who ran a ship chandlery in Freetown, Sierra Leone. It read:

US lens replacement shipped aboard *Donna Luisa*.

Jim Woodward had no idea that the ring was already being informed he was the "lens" replacing the murdered Caulfield.

Eyeing the shot of drugged rye on the table before him, Woodward knew exactly what he was going to do. It was a trick he had learned from an OSS man years ago.

He pulled out his cigarettes, put the pack down near the edge of the table and picked up his rye. Woodward tossed off the rye and put the glass down, holding the drugged liquor in his mouth. A careless movement of his arm swept the cigarette pack to the floor. Bending over to retrieve it, he quickly spat the rye under the table.

He sat up and lit a cigarette. The girl's oval face was without suspicion. Only the expectant look in her eyes hinted that she was waiting for the drug to act.

Abruptly he felt giddy. His eyes became heavy and difficult to focus. He was fighting off a wave of nausea which threatened to engulf him. Although he had swallowed only a few drops of liquor the drug was exceedingly potent. I don't have to try to make this look good, he thought in acute discomfort.

Dizziness and nausea were already passing. He felt a bit better although he was careful not to show it. "S'pose we go to your room, honey," he muttered thickly.

His head drooped convincingly. Slumping over the table, he feigned sleep. The girl nodded toward the bar and Sifak came to the table, trailed by the waiter. While they

hoisted Woodward to his feet and started for the stairs, the girl got up and left.

No one paid much attention to a drunk in the Star of Beirut. They took him up to Jeanne's room and dropped him into a rattan armchair. The waiter left.

Woodward felt Sifak's hand going expertly through his pockets. A few minutes later he heard the incisive click of spike heels on the bare, polished floor.

"You found his identity card?" Jeanne asked.

"Right here," Sifak grunted. "American seaman. His name is James W. Woodward."

"It checks," she said coolly. "He was telling me the truth."

She paused, then: "What's that in your hand?"

"His wallet," Sifak's voice was defensive. "About twenty five dollars, US."

"Fool! Kouri would not be pleased to learn you still act the pickpocket. Take out only the price of the drinks."

Grumbling the Lebanese did as she ordered. Woodward felt the wallet being replaced in his pocket.

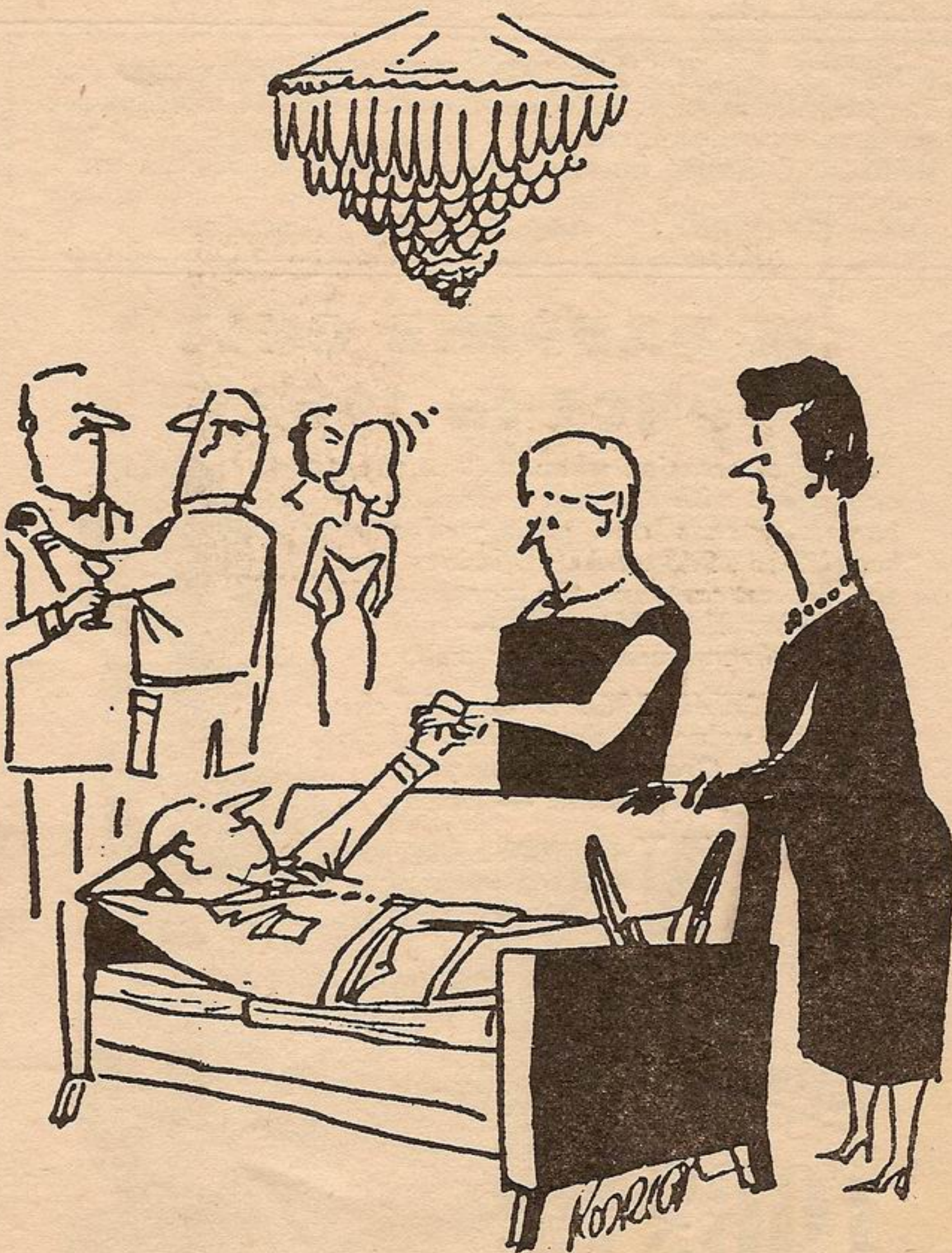
He listened to Sifak's heavy footsteps retreating toward the door, and he wondered who Kouri was. His name had not appeared in any DPS reports.

The door closed and Woodward was alone with the girl. Her heels clicked toward the far side of the room and he warily opened his eyes a little. Under lowered lids he observed she had kicked off her pumps and was beginning to undress.

He watched the tantalising procedure as she peeled the nylons from her long, beautiful legs. Without a glance in his direction she slipped off her clothes.

For a moment or two she was revealed, nude and magnificent. The movements of her supple body were as graceful as a tigress as she stretched her arms and yawned.

He closed his eyes when she approached and he knew she was surveying him to assure herself he was really out. He didn't open his eyes again until after she had switched off the light and he heard a creak from the direction of the bed.



"Mrs Andley, this is Major-General Weffle, retired."

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His thoughts ignited as he sprawled on the rattan chair . . . Sleep was a long time in coming . . .

He was awakened by a hand shaking his shoulder. It was broad daylight and his body felt cramped and uncomfortable. Jeanne was a seductive picture in black negligee and mules.

"You drank a little too much last night, *mon ami*," she said, regarding him gravely. She poured a cup of coffee and handed it to him. Drinking some of the hot liquid he seemed to collect his senses. Abruptly he put down the cup and dashed to the window. "The *Donna Luisa*! She's sailed! I'm stranded!"

"You have money, *mon ami*."

"Not enough to get me out of Freetown."

She studied his face and he knew he had guessed right. She had manoeuvred this situation shrewdly, as cleverly as she had decoyed other seamen before him into missing their ships and becoming couriers for the ring.

"There is a man named Kouri," she said. "He might pay well to have a package delivered quietly in Dakar."

"How much?" he asked quietly. "Perhaps 50 pounds and your steamship ticket. I can take you to him, *mon ami*."

Late in the morning she took him to a ramshackle, two-storey wooden building on the waterfront near the north end of the harbor. The name, in peeling gilt on the long unwashed window, was **ALEXANDER KOURI, SHIPS' STORES**.

The man nodding silently to them from a battered roll-top desk was a Lebanese, about 55. Surrounded by a disorderly assembly of ropes, tools, junk and dust-covered ship equipment, he stared owlishly at Woodward through thick glasses. He asked no questions.

"He will do," Kouri said, turning to the girl. "The *Gambia Prince* sails for Dakar at 2 pm tomorrow." His voice was soft, with a slight lisp.

Kouri opened a small drawer and carefully counted out some money. "You will go to the office of the Sierra Leone and Senegal Steamship Ltd and buy the ticket to Dakar," he instructed.

Woodward nodded. "What about my 50 pounds?"

"This evening the package will be delivered to you at the Star of Beirut. You will take it to a man named John Haddad, 25 Rue des Fleurs in Dakar. He will pay you. One thing more, about the package you will carry. It will be of considerable value. More than 200,000 dollars worth of industrial diamonds. But do not make any mistakes or become greedy. I assure you that you will be closely watched all the way."

"I won't make any mistakes," Woodward said. "I can use the 50 pounds."

He walked out into the hot sunlight with the girl and left her after receiving directions to the steamship office.

Behind them, in his shop, Kouri stared at them through the dusty window until they were out of sight. He was joined by a second Lebanese, a hawk-nosed man with a knife scar on his right cheek, who emerged quietly from behind the partition in the rear of the shop.

"You heard, Ridal," Kouri said softly. "This is what comes of your bungling. The American agent should never have lived to reach the Star of Beirut last night. Once he met the girl things took their course." Kouri stared at Ridal allowing his words to sink in.

"However," Kouri continued, "in a way your bungling was not without results. Both Sifak and the girl are strongly suspected by the Diamond Protective Service. The American's interest in them has confirmed this. They have outlived their usefulness. You know what to do."

Ridal nodded grimly. "Woodward, too?"

Kouri shrugged. "Why waste a courier? I will inform Haddad to

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take care of him in the usual way after the delivery has been completed."

Alexander Kouri, born in 1903 in Junya, Lebanon, was a man of many names and of many cunning talents. To Lebanon authorities he was known under his own name as a suspected gun smuggler. To the Turkish police he was Alexander Bouali, an illicit dealer in narcotics who fled to Italy, one jump ahead of the law. To certain rueful diamond buyers of the Kelikanstraat gem district in Antwerp he was known as Alexi Coquil, a master swindler who had bilked them out of more than 100,000 dollars worth of white diamonds by dextrously substituting almost worthless glass "schlenkers". Kouri was also wanted in Monrovia, Liberia, and in Kimberley, South Africa, under other names for crimes ranging from IDB and smuggling to murder.

Masked behind his thick glasses and soft, lisping voice was a daring, ruthless and imaginative international crook. Kouri never hesitated to eliminate anyone, including his own confederates, who might jeopardise his own safety. He was essentially a lone wolf who felt loyal to no one and his criminal record was one of sporadic activity on three continents.

Because of this it was understandable why Interpol did not have a helpful dossier on him when he came to Sierra Leone in 1955. The International Police, as a matter of fact, was under the impression that Kouri was several different men. Not until his various activities were carefully studied and integrated into one file did Interpol learn otherwise. This was equally true as far as the DPS was concerned.

Agent John Townsend, pushed into a rock crusher by a man named Urfa Dyiar, never did realise his killer was Kouri. This fact was later established by a Sierra Leone nurse employed in the dental clinic at Sefadu. Detectives of the Selection Trust discovered that native workers in the mines were stealing diamonds by concealing them in their mouths and then reporting to the dental clinic with toothaches. The nurse had been collecting the diamonds and passing them along to Kouri.

Agent Wingate, who was blown to pieces, had the elusive Lebanese under observation for DPS, believing he was watching a man named John Binsam. Not until much later did a powder and explosive worker at Bo admit that the description of the John Binsam, who had illegally purchased some gelignite from him, tallied with that of Alexander Kouri.

As for the equally unfortunate third agent, Caulfield, his throat had been slit before he had even heard Kouri's name mentioned by the girl or George Sifak.

Only Jim Woodward had succeeded in making any progress at all.

Woodward went directly to the office of Sierra Leone and Senegal Steamship Ltd after leaving the ship chandlery. He purchased a ticket for Dakar.

Kouri had warned him he was to be closely watched. He had not the least doubt about it. He idled his way through much of the day, acting like a seaman on the beach,

careful not to make any suspicious moves.

Inside he was taut and keyed up. He was goaded by a sense of urgency. Over and over he mentally framed a message he was anxious to send Merriman in London until the words kept flashing through his brain:

Alert authorities Dakar on John

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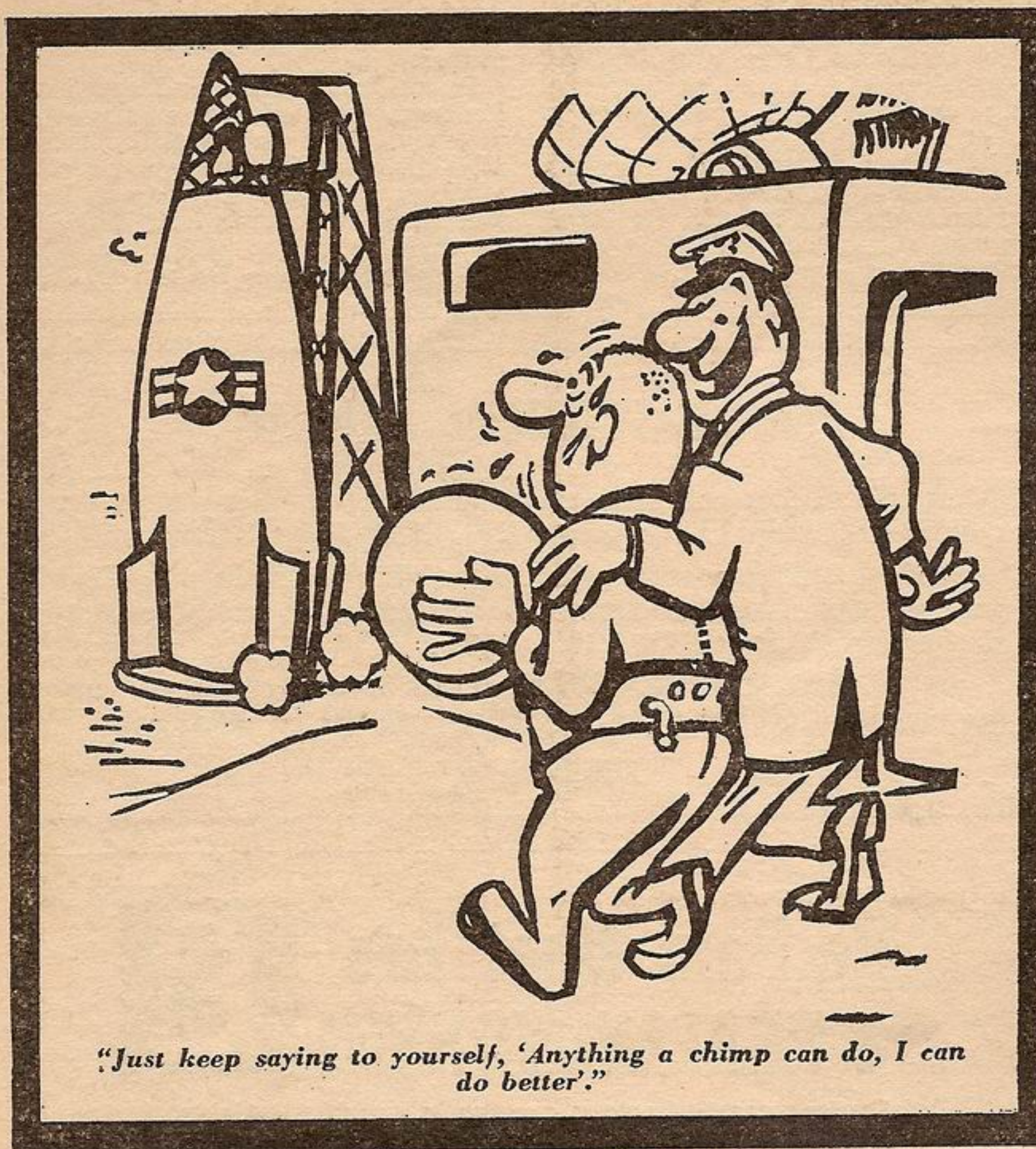
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shop. Maybe he changed his mind?"

"You find waiting with me tiresome, *mon ami*?" she smiled at him quizzically. "Sifak does not bring the package from Kouri. He has had much farther to go."

The fragrance of her perfume was in his nostrils. Her nonchalant acceptance of him suggested an intimacy which they had not shared. Damn, he thought and felt an odd pang of frustration.

There was a knock at the door. He heaved a sigh that was both chagrin and relief when Sifak came into the room. At least he would now have something beside Jeanne's tantalising proximity to think about.

"The courier from Bo was late," Sifak complained to the girl. He unbuttoned his shirt, took off the wide cotton belt he wore around his body. Somewhat like a money belt, it had small, bulging pockets.

Woodward put it on, carefully concealing his feeling of elation. Two-hundred thousand dollars worth of industrial diamonds, he thought triumphantly. What a haul of evidence.

"Kouri's coming here later," Sifak said to the girl. "He left word with the waiter. Orders are to put this one in a room for the night. Ridal's to see him aboard the *Gambia Prince* in the morning." He turned to Woodward. "I'll show you to the room now."

It was a small room, boasting little more than a lumpy bed and a straight-backed chair. Woodward locked the door behind him and methodically emptied the contents of his pocket on the chair. He removed the belt from under his shirt and examined it closely. He could feel the diamonds, hundreds of tiny stones in the bulging little pouches. The pouch flaps were sewed down tightly. He was tempted to slit the stitches of one of the flaps to inspect some of the stones but restrained the impulse. No matter how carefully he used a razor blade the belt would show signs of having been tampered with.

It can wait until Dakar, he reflected. But it would have been easier if I could have alerted Meriman.

Abruptly another solution occurred to him. It was really quite simple. Despite the vigilance of his unknown guards, he would have an opportunity to contact the authorities through customs agents in Dakar.

I'll have 'em radio back to Freetown to round up Kouri and the others, he decided, then close in fast on Haddad with the French police.

Shortly before midnight Woodward fell asleep. But less than half an hour later he was wide awake and listening intently. He thought he had heard a shot.

The muffled crack of a gun reached his ears. This time there could be no doubt about it. Snatching up the cloth belt, he dashed out into the hall in the direction of Jeanne's room. He slammed his shoulder against the locked door and stumbled into the room.

Haddad, 25 Rue des Fleurs, he kept thinking to himself.

He ate his evening meal in a small restaurant near the waterfront and at about 8.30 he entered the Star of Beirut. It was between drinking hours and only a few patrons were in the place. Neither Jeanne nor Sifak was about.

Woodward approached the bar. The Sierra Leone waiter was behind it, polishing glasses. Recognising Woodward, he nodded toward the stairs. "She's in her room."

He climbed the stairs and knocked at the door of her room. Jeanne opened the door and he saw she was wearing her black negligee and mules. Her dress, a low-cut green affair, was draped across the bed. Evidently she was about to dress.

She was not in any hurry. Sitting on the edge of the bed and

crossing her beautiful legs, she carelessly revealed satin-white skin above gartered nylon.

"Sifak is bringing the package," she informed him. "You are to wait here for him. Meanwhile pour a cognac, *mon ami*. The bottle is on the table."

Woodward handed her the glass and poured one for himself. "I forgot to thank you this morning for putting me in touch with 50 pounds".

"Oh," she answered idly. "It was nothing."

She finished her drink and stood up, allowing the negligee to slip from her smooth shoulders. Woodward watched her admiringly as she dressed.

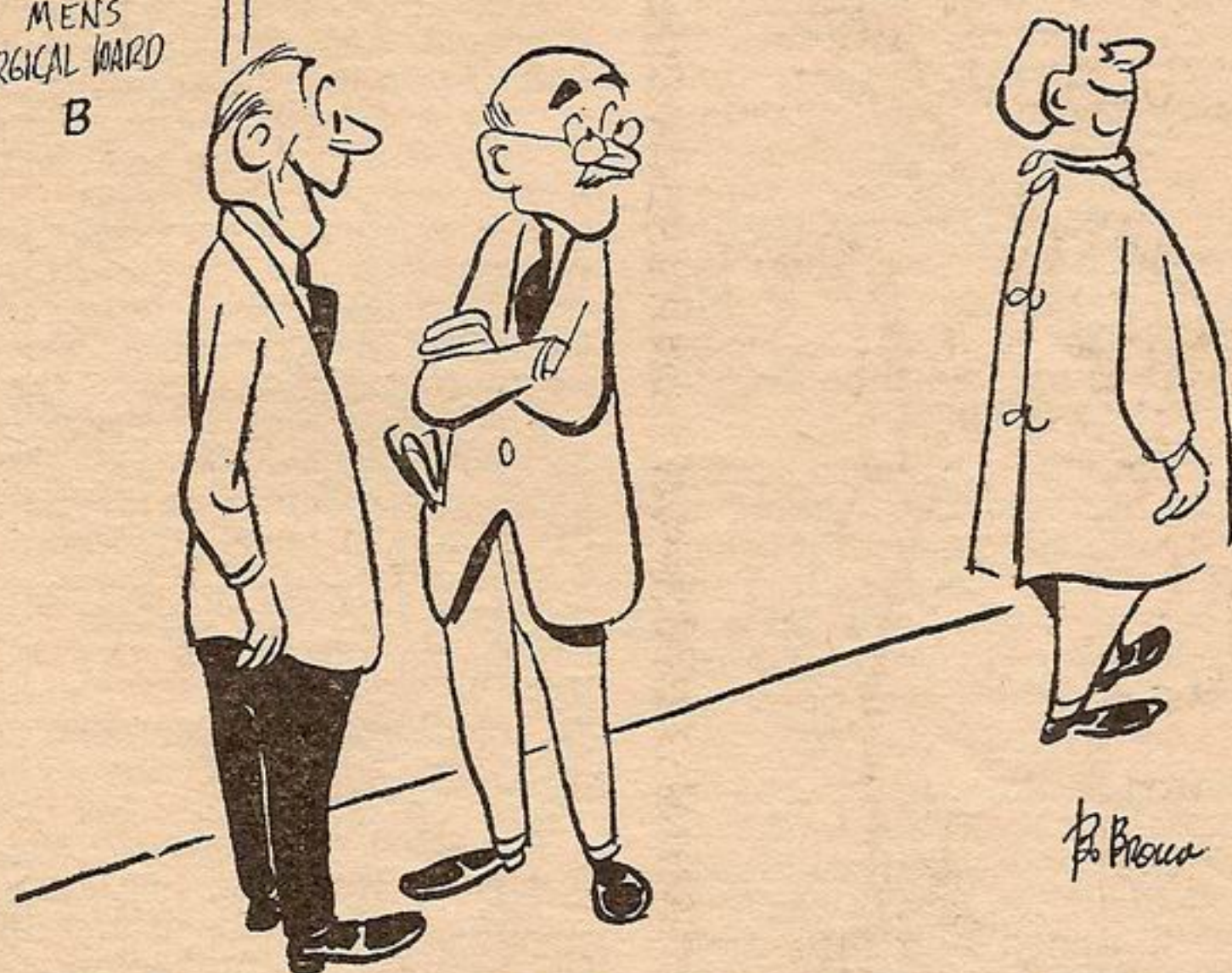
They had another drink together while waiting for Sifak and almost an hour went by. At length Woodward asked:

"It's a short distance to Kouri's

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"That Dr Appleby certainly is a funny fellow . . . keeps us in sutures."

Sifak lay face down on the floor, the back of his head blown out. Jeanne cowed on the bed, menaced by a man whose back was turned to Woodward.

Kouri, he thought, and the man turned swiftly, a .32 glinting in his hand. Not Kouri but the hawk-nosed man with a scar on his cheek.

Woodward slashed out savagely with the heavy belt. It coiled around the man's neck and the buckle end snapped hard across his face. He got off one shot as he was thrown off balance, and the slug whined past Woodward's head, thudding into the wall behind.

Woodward grabbed the Lebanese by his gun wrist, snapping it sharply to the side. There was another shot. A bullet drilled upward through the Lebanese's eye into his brain.

Woodward bent over the body. "I thought you were expecting Kouri," he said to the girl. "Who's this?"

"Gia Ridal," she was trying to control her shaking voice. "Kouri sent him here to kill Sifak and me. Because of you."

He stared at her in genuine surprise.

"Kouri knew all along that you were working for the diamond security police," she said. "So did Ridal. Sifak and I were the ones you fooled. Until Ridal told us tonight."

His eyes widened. He had almost played right into Kouri's hands. "Where is Kouri now? In that rat-trap store of his?"

She shook her head. He had flown up to Dakar on the evening plane. He would be waiting there, at the house on the Rue des Fleurs for Woodward to deliver the

stones. "In Dakar," she added, "Alexander Kouri is known as John Haddad."

Shortly after 2 am, Inspector Williams, police officer in charge of the night detail at headquarters, Freetown, was visited by an American seaman named Jim Woodward and Jeanne Duschne. Although Woodward's only credentials were his seaman's papers, the cloth belt, which he placed on the inspector's desk, contained more than 200,000 dollars worth of industrial diamonds. This was sufficiently convincing to persuade the police to radio Spencer Merriman, assistant chief of the DPS organisation in London.

Merriman answered immediately, requesting that James W. Woodward, special DPS agent, be given full co-operation. After this, events moved rapidly.

In Dakar, Senegal, on the following evening, Alexander Kouri, alias John Haddad, was fatally wounded in a gun battle with the police while trying to escape from the house at 25 Rue des Fleurs.

On information supplied by Jeanne Duschne, two illicit diamond buyers from Russia were seized, five collectors for Kouri's ring were arrested in the interior of Sierra Leone, and secreted on the French Guinea border beyond Sefadu, a 600,000 dollar cache of industrial diamonds was uncovered by DPS agents.

Because of her help in smashing the Kouri smuggling ring, Jeanne Duschne was not brought to trial in Sierra Leone. Early in November she was quietly deported to Paris. Since he was returning to London, Woodward agreed to keep Jeanne in custody all the way. It turned out to be the best part of his assignment.

CHARTERED FOR DEATH

(Continued from page 25)

He wormed his way silently into the garage. It was several feet longer than the car and a work bench and wash-up sink stretched the width of the rear wall. Donovan whistled under his breath. A girl, nude but for filmy panties and bra, was standing at the sink intent on some toilet preparation. He stared curiously for a moment and then it came to him. She was dyeing her hair, getting ready for a quick disappearance. He grinned to himself. "My, My," he said softly. "I wonder if old Banks knew what his secretary had hidden under her business frock?"

The girl gave a muffled scream and jumped wildly. Her leap took her with her back to the bench and she stood staring wide-eyed at him, the back of one hand pressed to her mouth.

"Did I startle you?" Donovan asked innocently.

"You," the girl said hoarsely. "What are you doing here?"

"Asking questions," Donovan answered gently. "Questions like: why is this car so damned precious that you knifed a man to have it all to yourself?"

"No," the girl said. "I didn't knife John."

"Yes you did," Donovan corrected. "He told you that Banks and he had brought me in. You were afraid that I might tell Banks about the lass with the lovely legs who enticed me away from my plane long enough for someone, John of course, to switch another car for this one. You thought that Banks might start putting two and two together and come up with the

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idea that his secretary and his chauffeur weren't as loyal as he thought."

She gave in then. "All right I did kill him. I did all the snooping and planning—he merely switched the cars. Why should I share with him," She began to smile reminisciently. "We did have fun that night, didn't we?" She turned slightly, showing Donovan the full, luscious curves of her body. She smiled over her shoulder at him. "We could share . . .," she let her voice trail away and then finished softly, "a lot of things."

And then, with Donovan staring wildly at her, tempted almost beyond his will, she pulled the pistol. He never knew where it came from, but it must have been on the bench under her hand. Just the slightest flick and it was there and she was shooting.

Her first bullet whispered an inch from his ear. The second went through the space between his left arm and his body. And then Donovan put a slug a half inch under the left cup of her bra. Her third bullet smashed the .38 from his hand in a whirling arc. He stood staring at her. She was sagging slowly down the front of the bench but the gun in her hand was steady. Her eyes glared at him from a face twisted to a maniacal mask.

"Doll," Donovan said earnestly, "you're washed up. You've got 10 maybe 15 minutes. Let's call it quits."

Her lips twisted. "I planned and schemed and murdered for that car. If you think I'm going to hand it over to a bum airline pilot you're wrong, Buster," she said, and shot him full in the body.

The shock threw Donovan up on his toes and back against the wall, and then his knees crumpled and the oil-stained concrete floor came up and smashed him in the face.

They were both on the floor. The girl with her back to the bench and those stupendous legs stretched out in front of her. Donovan face downwards with his head almost between her tiny, arched feet. He lifted his head and wet his dry lips. "All right, Doll," he said in an agonised whisper. "You've gut-shot me. Finish it off. Don't let me lie here in agony for days."

She tried to shake her head but it was too much for her. "Die slow, Buster, and listen to me laugh," she said, and she made an attempt to laugh and choked on it. She was silent for a moment, breathing heavily. When she spoke again her voice was stronger. "Sorry for you, Buster. I'll give you a laugh, too. Think about you and me and old Banksie and John, all dead, and some mug driving 40,000 pounds worth of car. Didn't know that, did you, Buster? Old Banksie the gold smuggler. Buying cars for his friends overseas and replacing all bodywork with gold sheets. Getting twice the regular price for the gold when they strip the cars in the Orient. And now no-one will ever know. Gold car!" She began to laugh, a tearing, choking laugh that ended in a gasp. The lovely legs moved a little, as though she was walking someplace, and then she was still.

"Hollywood lost a great star when you became a pilot," Donovan said sourly, and climbed to his feet. He reached into his coat pocket and hauled out the crocodile skin covered book he'd taken from John. The girl's last bullet had smashed it dead centre and then, deflected by its toughness, had angled off to come out through the curved back. A shallow, bleeding groove along Donovan's ribs showed the path it had followed from there.

Donovan walked over and looked at the dashboard of the car. The key was in the ignition. He got in, settled himself, switched on the ignition and pressed the starter. The motor coughed once and began to purr softly. Donovan grinned. "Baby," he said aloud, "You ain't no Cadillac, but you sure are 9 carat gold plated!"

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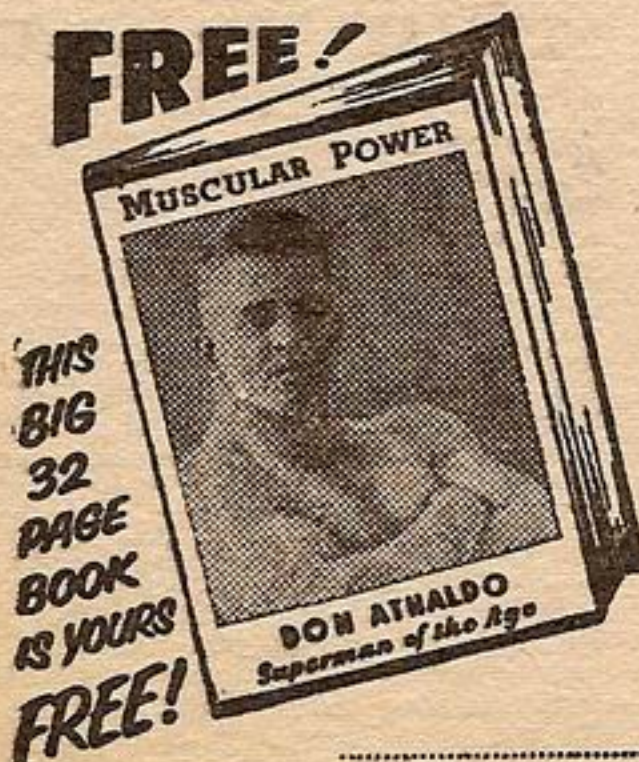
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—ROBERT FROST



"Yes, darling; of course, you know I do, darling!"

THE DOZEN DIRTY TRICKS

(Continued from page 29)

Very big. Maybe the invasion. Wehrmacht divisions in southern France were placed on the alert as both Hitler and Rommel wondered what Montgomery would do next.

At that moment, Field Marshal Montgomery was quite occupied with final preparations for the Normandy landings at Eisenhower's headquarters. He was in England, never having left for Gibraltar at all. The man bustling around at the Mediterranean "Rock" was Captain Meyrick James of the Royal Army Pay Corps, a peaceful junior officer who was to achieve post-war acclaim for his book titled "I Was Monty's Double".

He was just that — but the Nazis never guessed.

Seven fully equipped German divisions were waiting for him in southern France when the Allied invasion force blasted its way ashore in Normandy.

(6) Since it was likely that some German agents or photo-reconnaissance planes would spot the

huge invasion force in England and would guess that the Channel shore of France was the target, it was extremely important to try to fool the Nazis as to which part of the French coast would be hit.

Therefore, the problem was how to sell Rommel, Hitler and Co the delusion that the attack would be on the Pas-de-Calais.

British agents began with "the map bit" in Lausanne (Switzerland).

"Would you by any chance have a copy of Sheet 51 of the Michelin maps?" Miss Constance Dalton, a British Embassy secretary, asked a Swiss book merchant.

"I will see, *Mademoiselle*," the shop owner replied.

The slim Scotch girl showed no sign that (a) she knew that she was being tailed by a German agent, as were all employees of the British Embassy (b) she was aware that the store-keeper was a paid Nazi operative. Sheet 51 was a detailed chart of the Pas-de-Calais area, and her purchase was swiftly reported to the International Espionage Section of Herr von Ribbentrop's Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Berlin.

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titude intended, all this was relayed by von Ribbentrop to SS spy boss Walter Schellenberg, head of the RSHA that was Hitler's own central intelligence collection agency.

(7) If the landings were actually to strike the Pas-de-Calais, certain preliminary moves by the invaders were inevitable. Basic military tactics called for a thorough aerial photographing of the zone by high altitude planes, and then a massive bombing program to soften up the defences. There would also be some furtive reconnaissance of beach defences and coastal minefields by teams of rubber-suited frogmen. Such underwater scouting had preceded the most recent US landings in the Pacific, as the German Military

Attache in Tokyo had faithfully reported to Berlin.

"We've got to give them all three — the whole package," a one-star general in US Army G-2 warned the Fortitude staff.

"That shouldn't be too hard, for we want to bomb those V-1 rocket launchers on the Pas-de-Calais anyway," an RAF Group Leader suggested.

From May 15 through the morning before D-Day, American 8th Air Force and RAF heavies blasted away at V-1 firing ramps and other military installations in the Pas-de-Calais. More than 600 planes a day bombed the rocket sites, coastal radar stations and anti-aircraft batteries with thousands of tons of high explosives. At the same time, two squadrons of reconnaissance planes took endless strips of film from above 24,000 feet.

Then — on the morning of May 28 — a Wehrmacht sentry patrolling the beach south of Cherbourg found something unusual on the sand. Surrounded by a score of inhuman looking tracks was a rubber flipper.

Five crack anti-aircraft battalions were swiftly shifted into the sector — two of them from Normandy. In addition, every open pasture in the region was defaced with metal obstacles to prevent glider landings.

The deception paid off in many ways.

(8) To add weight to the false clues that suggested a possible large-scale airborne landing near Cherbourg on the Pas-de-Calais, a number of emergency air strips in southern England just across from Cherbourg suddenly sprouted large numbers of tents and gliders. Some of the gliders — including several that could be seen from cars passing on nearby public highways — were painted with such cheery slogans as "Bonjour, Cherbourg!" and "Drop Dead, Adolph!"

The sentries protecting these fields seemed remarkably lax, and

a number of teen-age boys got close enough to observe the signs. Word soon spread through the neighborhood, the local pubs and the nearby towns. It even reached the ears of an ex-convict who was on the payroll of a not-quite-neutral foreign diplomat. He sent the word out by diplomatic pouch to Madrid. Within 48 hours, Nazi recon planes were soaring over those strips taking pictures of the gliders.

The pictures were quite good, but they didn't show two things.

The gliders were all cheaply-made dummies.

And 19 out of every 20 tents were empty.

(9) The Allies knew that the Nazis couldn't be fooled into believing these lightly equipped airborne troops could carry out a European invasion on their own. They would inevitably be wiped out by enemy panzer divisions unless they were quickly reinforced by their own armored units.

"We've got to give them tanks — lots of tanks," an OSS schemer insisted.

"No sweat, we've got a whole damn warehouse full of the most unusual tanks any Luftwaffe pilot ever saw," replied an Army Signal Corps camouflage expert.

A scant four days later, big US Army trucks were rolling through the night down back roads into the same area where the sham gliders were being exhibited. The large canvas-covered vehicles pulled into pastures and fields shortly before midnight, and dozens of specially trained troops piled out to unload the extraordinary cargo. They worked at top speed all through the hours of darkness, for it was essential that they be finished before dawn. They sweated and grumbled and pumped. They completed their strange hush-hush assignment less than half an hour before the sun came up on the bright clear morning of May 24.

They had done quite a fantastic — and top secret — job.

In nine hours, they had filled 83 fields and pastures with some 3200 hulking US Sherman medium tanks.

Every one of them was a fake.

They were ingeniously crafted inflatable dummies, complete in all details down to the gunner's periscope. They were such perfect counterfeits that they looked completely real from only 150 yards away. To make the deception even more persuasive, special machines marked the ground around these dummies with scores of tank tracks that stood out nicely on the Luftwaffe's reconnaissance photos.

(10) The Fortitude staff kept getting in deeper and deeper — right into the water. If they were going to fool the Nazis about those tanks, some method had to be provided for delivering all this mock armor to the supposedly picked beaches on the Pas-de-Calais. That meant landing craft. It required many hundreds of LCTs, LSTs and other flat-bottomed vessels.

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While the invasion force was well equipped, it certainly did not have hundreds of landing craft to waste on deception stunts. Fortunately, the joint US-British team masterminding the tricks was prepared.

For inflated tanks — use inflated dummy landing craft.

Hundreds of these rubberised "vessels" were moored along the beaches near the area where the dummy gliders and the fake tanks were massed. The imitation LCTs and LSTs were quite convincing. They were so realistic that a score of German E-boats, fast, deadly torpedo craft, were moved down to the Calais to ambush these vessels when they would arrive to land the Allied armor. Those E-boats could have done a lot of damage off Omaha Red and other Normandy beaches on D-Day.

(11) All the clues that appeared to point to the Pas-de-Calais had to be reinforced and substantiated by a report from a reliable German agent, a professional spy who had produced accurate information in the past.

MI-5, the counter-espionage branch of British Military Intelligence, had just such a man all ready. He was a Nazi spy employed by the Ministry Information in London. Although he had been detected as an enemy agent in November of 1944, MI-5 had been saving him for use in some major mischief. In the interim, he had been carefully fed numerous small bits of accurate information that would impress his bosses in Berlin but would not cost any Allied lives. He had no idea that he was being built up to a very large let-down. A suave, handsome man who played around rather promiscuously with both unwed young secretaries and other people's wives, he was riding high with plenty of money supplied by the grateful Nazis.

Early in April, 1944, the dapper sucker attended a party where he met the rather plain-looking secretary of a top British air marshal in the RAF Bomber Command. She was an earnest, pale,

bespectacled girl with a pleasant figure but the hungry look of an unmarried woman in her mid-thirties. The corrupt spy needed only a few minutes to conclude that she would be a perfect victim for his type of operation. He began to woo her with his usual technique of flattery, sophisticated chatter and champagne.

One night when he called at her office to pick her up for their date, she was just finishing typing a report.

"Be right with you, darling," she promised as she adjusted her glasses. "Notes on another of those silly hush-hush OVERLORD conferences, you know."

He smiled nonchalantly as if he didn't know that OVERLORD was the code word for the invasion, a fact that had been mentioned "in confidence" by his own boss only three days earlier. She completed her typing, walked to the wall mirror and began to apply her lipstick. As she did so, she could see from the corner of her eye that the enemy agent was furtively scanning the top sheet of the document on her desk. It was stamped MOST SECRET, and the lead paragraph was extremely interesting. It began: "The additional 70,000 tons of bombs must be delivered to Bomber Command depots well before D plus eight, when the main series of landings will follow the initial diversionary . . ."

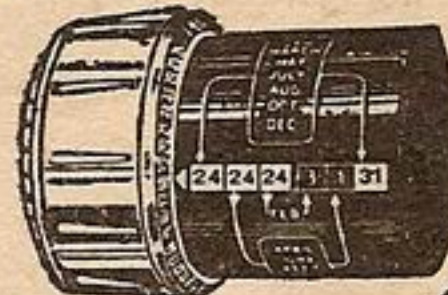
That was as much as he saw, but it was enough.

Enough to pass on to the Germans, for a fat bonus of £1000.

Enough to fool the Wehrmacht into believing that the first thrust into Normandy was a trick, and to convince the Nazis not to attack the beachhead with their full force because they had to save their reserves for the "main attack" elsewhere — the one that never came. Six German divisions that Field Marshall Rommel desperately needed to reinforce his Army Group B in Normandy were denied to him, for his superiors (von Runstadt and Hitler, himself) insisted on saving them to counter the "sec-



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ond" landings expected on the Pas-de-Calais.

(12) Finally, the Allies opened their whole bag of electronic tricks for the crucial D-Day deception.

One section dropped "chaff", thousands of pieces of aluminium foil that helped to confuse the enemy's radar.

Another group of planes carried a variety of radar jamming gear. They broadcast signals that blinded many of the Luftwaffe's detectors, another tactic that the Germans recognised as a traditional pre-assault manoeuvre. In addition the crews in these aircraft deliberately broke the normal security restrictions that enjoined them to keep radio talk to a minimum. Those rules, designed to hamper enemy location stations and intelligence eavesdroppers, were splintered as the fliers exchanged a tremendous amount of chatter. These well-rehearsed conversations indicated that many, many wings of bombers, perhaps 2000 planes or more, were on their way to the Pas-de-Calais.

As a result, at least 170 Messerschmitts that could have done a lot of damage over Normandy, were sent up on futile wild goose chases some 200-300 miles away.

Military historians now concur that it was a full 11 days before the Normandy beachhead was solidly established, and top Allied generals admit that the entire expeditionary force might have been bull-dozed back into the icy waters of the Channel at any time during that tense period. The outcome was in doubt again and again, and thousands of GI lives hung in the balance. Those US, British and Canadian troops fought extremely bravely, and finally broke out to start the long, bloody drive to Berlin.

But they might never have made it without Operation Fortitude. It kept more than 300,000 crack Nazi troops busy elsewhere, waiting far from the real beachhead until it was too late. No one denies that the Allied combat soldiers who blasted their way ashore and ripped open the Wehrmacht deserved medals and commendations that they received, but very few people realise that those courageous fighting men might never have lived to earn the honors if it had not been for the secret team of artful rogues that pulled off the slickest dozen deceptions of the 20th century.

A WATCH-DOG FOR VENUS

(Continued from page 35)

Quayne had been on boats in the war and he picked it out straight away. It was a Fairmile launch, one of the beautifully built boats the British Admiralty had used for escorting coastal convoys and hunting submarines. The two 1200 horse-power Packard engines gave it a speed of 20-25 knots.

The Admiralty had sold these boats all over the world to private buyers after the war and smugglers had picked up a lot of them as ideal for their shifty purposes. This one had had an extra deckhouse built to make it look like a pleasure cruiser. Rafael's mates were businesslike men.

They came up into sight now, two of them with guns bulging their fists, another one left at the wheel.

After they had pulled alongside Rafael gestured again with the Obregon for them to board the other vessel.

Quayne knew it had to be now. He had eyed the underwater gun a minute or two before and now he made his play.

As he flung himself sideways for it the Obregon barked nervously and the bullet splintered the deck. But his hand was already closing around the butt of the Italian Torpedine, the venomous fish slayer.

Rafael fired again and once more his aim was bad. Squirming over on to his back, Quayne brought up the slender weapon and fired. The two telescopic springs made of Swedish steel hurled the harpoon with the force of a hurricane.

Rafael screamed as the twin steel barbs tore through his chest.

He went down, dying, the Obregon dropping from his hand. The girl, moving like a cat, snatched it up and carefully and deliberately shot down the squat boatman scrambling toward her.

Flame lanced from the other boat as the two men on deck fired hard and fast. Sliding like a snake across his own deck, Quayne groped for and pulled out of Rafael's pocket the Chief Special .38. It added its throaty boom to the clatter of sound. One of the two marksmen crumpled over and lay there. The other dived for the spare deckhouse.

But Quayne was already coming on board, springing after the man, a seething anger inside him. The man squirmed around, fear on his hawkish face, bringing the gun up. But Quayne smashed it out of his hand and beat at the other's head savagely until he collapsed.

Then he slithered toward the man in the other deckhouse. But the third man, a weak hireling, had already thrown his gun down and was yelping for mercy in a terrified voice.

Quayne moved into the deckhouse, backhanded him savagely across the face, and as he cowered away, ordered him with snarling gestures back to the wheel.

Quayne looked unbelievably at his watch. It had all taken a little over a minute.

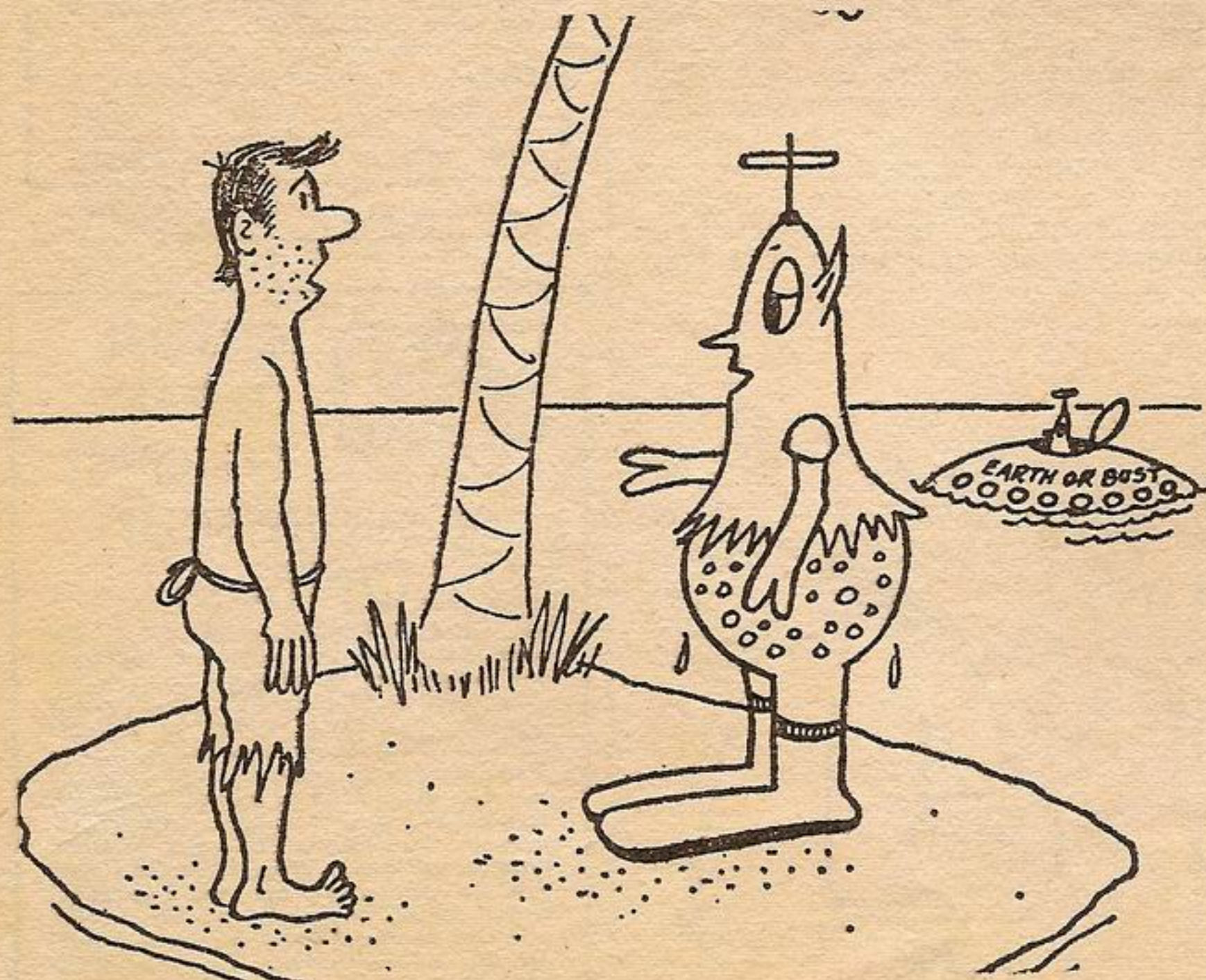
The girl was suddenly alongside him, her near-naked body a thing of shadowy, heart-pounding desire in the darkness.

Quayne looked at her and let out a long hissing breath. "If I'm going to have to keep on doing this all the time it would be much better if we were married. That way I could be really close to you all the time."

She looked back at him silently. She said suddenly, "I believe you're right. I think perhaps we could attend to that very soon."

Quayne thought, so there will be a wedding with herdsmen slaughtering cattle for a feast and Indians performing love dances, after all.

He slipped his arm around her sleek shoulders and headed for the deckhouse, hoping Dom Carlos would not hurry too much with that rescue party.



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